

# **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

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### **RURAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Prepared by the Office of Business Relations and Economic Development  
King County

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions are from the King County Comprehensive Plan Glossary

#### **Rural Area**

The Growth Management Act requires that counties designate a rural area in order to conserve the rural character and quality of the existing rural lands in Washington. King County's Rural Area contains very low-density residential development, commercial and industrial development, farms, forests, watersheds crucial for fisheries and flood control, mining areas, small cities and towns, historic sites and buildings, archaeological sites, and regionally important recreation areas.

#### **Rural Character\***

(14) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:

- (a) In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;
- (b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;
- (c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- (d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat;
- (e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development;
- (f) That generally do not require the extension of urban governmental services; and
- (g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

\*Note: King County adopted the same definition of Rural Character as defined in the Washington State Growth Management Act.

#### **Rural Cities**

King County's rural cities are incorporated areas within the Rural Area whose local governments are involved in the region's planning processes on an equal legal basis with the suburban cities and Seattle. The incorporated rural cities are Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, Skykomish and Snoqualmie. (See Chapter Three, Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands)

#### **Rural Growth**

Rural Growth refers to residential, commercial, and industrial growth that is scaled to be compatible with, and maintains the traditional character of the Rural Area. Rural growth typically does not require urban governmental services except in the case of some rural towns and to protect the environment as provided in this Comprehensive Plan. The basic elements of "Rural Character," as defined by the King County Countywide

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Planning Policies are natural features, resource-based industries, rural towns, rural neighborhoods, rural infrastructure and services, open space system, rural housing, rural economy, and rural cities.

### **Rural Neighborhoods**

Rural neighborhoods are small commercial developments, or in some cases, historic towns or buildings, that are too small to provide more than convenience shopping and services to surrounding residents. They generally do not have services such as water supply or sewage disposal systems any different from those serving surrounding rural residential development.

### **Rural Towns**

Rural towns are unincorporated towns governed directly by King County. They provide a focal point for community groups such as chambers of commerce or community councils to participate in public affairs. The purposes of rural town designations within the Comprehensive Plan are to recognize existing concentrations of higher density and economic activity in rural areas and to allow modest growth of residential and economic uses to keep them economically viable into the future.

### **Rural Zoning**

The rural zone is meant to provide an area-wide, long-term, rural character and to minimize land use conflicts with nearby agricultural, forest or mineral extraction production districts. These purposes are accomplished by:

- 1) limiting residential densities and permitted uses to those that are compatible with rural character and nearby resource production districts and are able to be adequately supported by rural service levels;
- 2) allowing small scale farming and forestry activities and tourism and recreation uses which can be supported by rural service levels and which are compatible with rural character; and
- 3) increasing required setbacks to minimize conflicts with adjacent agriculture, forest or mineral zones.

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **1. Applicable King County Comprehensive Plan Policies**

#### **AGRICULTURAL RELATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICES**

##### **C. Farming in the Rural Area**

The 1996 Farm and Forest Report provided a series of strategies for conserving farmland and sustaining farming within the designated Agricultural Production District where the prime agricultural soils are found, and recognized that there are also areas outside the APD where meaningful agricultural practices continue. The report identified areas where lands were in dairy or crop production and enrolled in the current use taxation program, determined that the low-density zoning in place in these areas was sufficient to protect the land base, and recommended that landowner incentive programs be focused there as well.

##### **KCCP POLICY R-111**

The county should develop specific incentives to encourage agricultural activities in the remaining prime farmlands located outside the Agricultural Production District. These incentives could include tax credits, expedited permit review, reduced permit fees, permit exemptions for activities complying with best management practices, assistance with agricultural waste management or similar programs.

##### **D. EQUESTRIAN COMMUNITIES**

King County recognizes the contributions of equestrian livestock husbandry, training, competition and recreation activities to the overall rural quality of life in King County. As growth occurs, open land to sustain livestock and existing or potential trail segments may be lost to uncoordinated land development and road improvements. Also, ESA requirements may limit livestock management choices and the location of new equestrian facilities on land constrained by large riparian corridors. The equestrian community designation in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is based on the presence of some or all these factors in portions of King County's Rural Areas:

- a. Proximity to a regional-level trail, designated by the State of Washington, King County or a city, that is accessible to horses;
- b. Tracts of land on which horseback riding is formally sanctioned or to which equestrian access traditionally has been granted;
- c. Concentrations of residential lots or acreage on which horses are kept;
- d. Commercial or noncommercial stables, riding schools and arenas;
- e. Supporting industries including but not limited to tack shops, feed stores or veterinarians; and
- f. Riding or homeowner associations that promote equestrian activities.

While equestrian uses are permitted throughout the Rural Area, the Equestrian Communities Map identifies those areas where continued equestrian uses are particularly supported and provides a way for rural communities and the county to coordinate various actions to help equestrian activities remain sustainable in King County.

##### **KCCP POLICY R-112**

King County should support the identified equestrian communities in the Rural Area by providing facilities on King County rights-of-way where not in conflict with the terms of utility easements to accommodate horse travel, by maintaining equestrian links, including multiple-use trails, where appropriate, and by adoption of supportive land use regulations for use of these areas for horsekeeping. King County will work with local communities to identify and protect multiple use trails and other public trails in the identified Equestrian Communities that support horse travel within the Rural Area.

##### **KCCP POLICY R-113**

Soft-surface multiple-use trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way are the preferred option for equestrian travel for safety reasons and to avoid conflicts with residential activities associated with the street. Existing off-road trails should be preserved during site development, with relocation as

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appropriate to accommodate development while maintaining trail connections. The King County Road Design Standards shall be revised, with input from representatives of the equestrian community, to accommodate safe equestrian travel within road rights-of-way. Where appropriate, capital improvement programs for transportation and park facilities shall also enable the use of new facilities by equestrians. Construction standards for multiple-use nonmotorized trails to be established in road rights-of-way within identified equestrian communities should assure a minimum eight-foot-wide gravel shoulder, or provide a trail separated from the driving lanes by a ditch or other barrier. Construction standards for soft-surface multiple-use nonmotorized trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way shall be consistent with current trail construction and maintenance practices as promulgated by the U.S. Forest Service.

### **KCCP POLICY R-114**

King County's land use regulations should protect rural equestrian community trails by supporting preservation of equestrian trail links in Equestrian Communities, protection of livestock from intrusions from residential development, and encouraging subdivision layouts that preserve opportunities for keeping of horses. Representatives of the equestrian community shall be given the opportunity to review and monitor regulatory and programmatic actions by King County, such as rural area development regulations, that have the potential to affect equestrian uses.

### **KCCP POLICY R-115**

Equestrian trails should be recognized as "linear parks" for purposes of the county's Public Benefit Rating System.

### **KCCP POLICY R-116**

County departments negotiating trades or sales of county land shall determine whether any historically established trails exist on the property, and assure that those trails are retained or replaced to assure that key linkages to regional systems are not lost as a condition of the trade or sale.

## **Section V. Resource Lands**

In 1994, the Agriculture Commission was established as a forum for farmers to take an active role in land use decisions, policies and regulations affecting commercial agriculture. The commission solicits input from agricultural agency technical advisors and others with land use and technical expertise, as well as other affected groups such as the Dairy Federation, Native American Tribes, and project proponents.

### **KCCP POLICY R-502**

The Agricultural Commission shall advise the King County Executive and Council on agricultural issues and programs, including, but not limited to:

- a. Existing and proposed legislation and regulations affecting commercial agriculture;
- b. Land use issues as they impact agriculture; and
- c. Ways to maintain, enhance and promote agriculture and agricultural products in the region.

King County shall continue to support the Agricultural Commission with staff and other resources.

## **Section V.A. Resource Conservation Strategy**

In 1985, the King County Comprehensive Plan designated five Agricultural Production Districts and the Forest Production District. Subsequent planning efforts established minimum lot sizes and uses for these districts and their surrounding areas. These land use regulations are consistent with the requirements of the GMA to designate productive lands and to plan for adjacent and nearby land uses compatible with long-term commercial farming and forestry.

GMA requires designation of agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance. Agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance are designated as Agricultural Production Districts and forest lands of long-term commercial significance are designated as the Forest Production District as shown on the Agricultural and Forest Lands Map.

### **KCCP POLICY R-503**

King County shall promote and support forestry, agriculture, mining and other resource-based industries as a part of a diverse, regional and sustainable economy.

### **KCCP POLICY R-504**

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Well-managed forestry and agriculture practices are encouraged because of their multiple benefits, including natural resource protection.

### **KCCP POLICY R-505**

Farm lands, forest lands and mineral resources shall be conserved for productive use through the use of Designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites where the principal and preferred land uses will be commercial resource management activities, and by the designation of appropriate compatible uses on adjacent rural and urban lands.

### **KCCP POLICY R-506**

Land uses, utilities and transportation facilities adjacent to Designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites, shall be sited and designed to ensure compatibility with resource management.

### **KCCP POLICY R-507**

King County should facilitate the siting of industries, infrastructure and services that serve and are served by resource-based industries in close proximity to designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites when adverse impacts and incompatibilities can effectively be mitigated.

### **KCCP POLICY R-508**

King County should expand access to preferential tax programs to encourage landowners to continue practicing farming and forestry and to help ensure retention of the resource land base. Preferential tax programs for resource uses should be publicized and marketed. Preferential tax programs applied to resource lands are indicative that the investment expectations of the owners are for the lands to be productive as resource lands. The effectiveness of these programs should be monitored and the programs modified as needed.

### **KCCP POLICY R-509**

King County shall employ a variety of innovative programs and incentives, tailored to the specific needs of each resource-based industry, to help maintain and enhance resource-based industries.

### **KCCP POLICY R-510**

King County should develop and employ effective means to inform affected property owners about nearby resource management activities. This may include, but not be limited to:

- a. Notice on title for properties within five hundred feet of designated agriculture, forestry, and mining lands;
- b. Signage for the Agricultural Production District, Forest Production District, Rural Forest Focus Areas; and
- c. Community meetings, and other public notification tools.

### **KCCP POLICY R-511**

King County shall work cooperatively with cities, federally recognized tribes, other public agencies, private utilities, resource managers, land owners and citizens to conserve public and private Natural Resource Lands for long-term productivity and environmental protection in a consistent and predictable manner.

### **KCCP POLICY R-512**

Designated Forest and Agricultural Production District lands shall not be annexed by cities.

### **KCCP POLICY R-513**

King County should establish written agreements with agencies, tribes and other affected parties whose close coordination and collaboration are essential to effective implementation of resource management programs. Such agreements should serve to establish consensus and commitment to achieving specific resource management goals and to define the specific roles and responsibilities of each agency.

### **KCCP POLICY R-514**

King County should avoid duplication of federal and state regulations that apply to resource-based industries. However, King County reserves the authority to address issues of local concern with regard to resource-based activities and operations.

### **KCCP POLICY R-515**

Resource-based industries should use practices that protect the long-term integrity of the natural and built environment, adjacent land uses, and cultural resources that maintain the long-term productivity

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of the resource base. Resource industry practices should result in maintenance of ecosystem health and habitat.

### **KCCP POLICY R-516**

Habitat protection requirements should not fall disproportionately on land maintained in agriculture or forestry, and the costs of such protection shall not be disproportionately placed on the owners of such land.

### **KCCP POLICY R-517**

King County should be a leader in resource management by demonstrating environmentally sound agriculture and forestry on county-owned land.

### **KCCP POLICY R-518**

King County shall provide for integrated resource education through trail and sign systems linked with working farms, forests, and mines. Interpretation should:

- a. Provide historical perspective;
- b. Demonstrate current adaptive resource management practices (forestry, fisheries, wildlife, agriculture); and
- c. Explain economics of various resource uses.

## **Section C. Agriculture**

Land suitable for farming is an irreplaceable natural resource. Since 1959, almost 60 percent of King County's prime agricultural land has been lost to urban and suburban development. Of 100,000 acres available for farming 40 years ago, today only 42,000 acres remain in agriculture.

Fortunately, the amount of agricultural land has stabilized due, in large part, to a variety of county policies and initiatives to conserve these commercially viable resource-based lands.

Agricultural lands and farming provide many benefits to the citizens of King County including scenic open space, a connection to our cultural heritage, fresh local foods and a diverse economy. In 2002, farmers in King County produced over \$94 million in agricultural sales. Commercial agricultural production, however, has declined by 30 percent in gross sales since 1978.

This section focuses on the county's efforts to maintain and enhance commercial agriculture for the value of local produce, dairy products, keeping livestock and for scenic and historic values. To meet the GMA requirement to maintain and enhance agriculture, a variety of methods and programs continue to be necessary. The policies call for King County to:

- Protect productive farmland by designation and zoning
- Limit development to uses that are necessary to support commercial agriculture;
- Prevent or minimize land use conflicts between farming operations and adjacent land uses;
- Allow necessary infrastructure (markets, water, affordable housing, supply stores, technical services, tax incentives) that supports commercial agriculture; and
- Encourage farming practices that conserve soils and protect water quality, fisheries and wildlife.

### **Section 1. *Protecting Agricultural Lands***

In 1979, voters approved a \$50 million ballot measure to protect farmland threatened by development. The Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) became the first voter-approved measure in the nation to protect farmland in a metropolitan area. By purchasing the development rights, the FPP keeps farmland open and available through covenants that restrict development and limit the properties' uses exclusively for agriculture and open space. The covenants "run with the land" in perpetuity so the land is protected regardless of ownership. Under the FPP, the county owns the development rights; however, the lands remain in the private ownership of over 200 property owners. The county cannot sell or remove its interest in FPP lands with the exception of conveying public road or utility easements.

In 1995, the county approved an additional \$3 million to the purchase of additional development rights under the Farmland Preservation Program. In October 1999, the county formally recognized the 20th anniversary of the Farmland Preservation Program and its success to date in preserving over 12,800 acres of farmland for the generations of today and tomorrow.

### **KCCP POLICY R-535**

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King County shall continue to implement the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program. Protection of property purchased under the FPP shall be a high priority when balancing conflicting interests such as locating transportation, active recreation or utility facilities.

Agriculture is most productive in agricultural communities where neighbors support agriculture, where parcels are large enough for commercial agriculture and where labor, supplies and markets for farm products are available. King County's farm soils and most profitable farms are usually found in contiguous blocks with few nonagricultural uses. In 1985, King County established Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) with large lot zoning and specifying agriculture as the preferred use in these areas.

The Agricultural Production Districts, shown on the Agriculture and Forest Lands Map in this chapter, present the least number of land use conflicts for agriculture, contain agricultural support activities and provide the best environment for farming in King County. The five Agricultural Production Districts are: the Sammamish Valley, the Snoqualmie Valley, the Lower Green River Valley, the Upper Green River Valley and the Enumclaw Plateau. Most of the farmlands preserved under the FPP are found in these APDs.

### **KCCP POLICY R-536**

Agricultural Production Districts are blocks of contiguous farmlands where agriculture is supported through the protection of agricultural soils and related support services and activities. Roads and natural features are appropriate boundaries for Agricultural Production Districts to reduce the possibility of conflicts with adjacent land uses.

### **KCCP POLICY R-537**

King County should purchase additional development rights to farmland in the Agricultural Production Districts as funding becomes available.

Livestock, dairy and large-scale commercial row-crop operations require large parcels of land to allow for production which is profitable and sustainable. Generally, 35 acres is needed for full-time wholesale commercial production of such products. Specialty agricultural products, products that are direct-marketed and part-time farming enterprises generally need less acreage to be profitable.

### **KCCP POLICY R-538**

All parcels within the boundaries of an APD should be zoned Agricultural, either A-10 or A-35. If small parcels in the APD are not zoned for Agriculture, permitted nonresidential uses must not conflict with agricultural uses in the APD.

### **KCCP POLICY R-539**

Lands within Agricultural Production Districts should remain in parcels large enough for commercial agriculture. A residential density of one home per 35 acres shall be applied where the predominant lot size is 35 acres or larger, and a residential density of one home per 10 acres shall be applied where the predominant lot size is less than 35 acres.

### **KCCP POLICY R-540**

Agriculture should be the principal land use in the Agricultural Production Districts. Permanent new construction within districts shall be sited to prevent conflicts with commercial farming or other agricultural uses, and nonagricultural uses shall be limited. New development shall not disrupt agriculture operations and shall have a scale compatible with an active farming district.

### **KCCP POLICY R-541**

On-site housing for farm employees shall be allowed where this can be accomplished without unnecessarily removing land from agricultural use or conflicting with other public interests. King County should develop guidelines to allow on-site housing for farm employees, including guidelines that account for the restrictive covenants on properties in the Farmland Preservation Program. Some of the highest quality salmon habitat in King County is found within Agricultural Production Districts (APDs). Additional protection or restoration of critical habitat within the APDs is likely to be recommended by Water Resources Inventory Area Salmon Conservation Plans. Protection and enhancement of existing salmon habitat is a resource based land use that should be included in all farm management plans. Specific habitat protection rules should not jeopardize the agricultural productivity within the APD. Aquatic habitat restoration or wetland mitigation projects should be limited in scale to achieve the objectives of the project while limiting fragmentation of farms and aquatic habitat. Many habitat restoration projects can be designed in a manner that provides benefits to both fish habitat and the agricultural landowner.



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### **KCCP POLICY R-542**

Aquatic habitat restoration projects or floodplain restoration projects are allowed on agricultural lands that are unsuitable for direct agricultural production purposes, such as portions of property that have not historically been farmed due to soil conditions or frequent flooding, and which cannot be returned to productivity by drainage maintenance, or where the proposed project would result in a net benefit to agricultural productivity. Agriculture must remain the predominant use in the APDs and these projects shall not reduce the ability to farm in the area. Such projects may only be allowed on agricultural lands when there are no other suitable lands available and the project is supported by landowners who would be impacted by the project and when:

- a. The project is included in an approved Water Resources Inventory Area Plan, Farm Management Plan, Flood Hazard Reduction Plan or other functional plan; or
- b. The project would improve agricultural productivity within the APD.

### **KCCP POLICY R-543**

Maintaining the viability of farmlands is a high priority for King County. Within the Agricultural Production Districts, measures to protect threatened or endangered species shall be tailored to ensure working farms can continue to operate.

Two Agricultural Production Districts (APD) in or near urban areas, the Lower Green River Valley and Sammamish Valley, were designated in the 1985 Comprehensive Plan, and those designations have been retained. The development rights from many, but not all, of the parcels in these two districts have been purchased through the Farmlands Preservation Program. The Lower Green APD is completely surrounded by urban designated land and as such, functions as both prime agriculture land and urban separator.

### **KCCP POLICY R-544**

King County commits to preserve Agricultural Production District parcels in or near the Urban Growth Area because of their high production capabilities, their proximity to markets, and their value as open space.

### **KCCP POLICY R-545**

The Lower Green River Agricultural Production District is a regionally designated resource that is to remain in unincorporated King County. The Lower Green River Agricultural Production District functions as an urban separator between the cities of Kent and Auburn. King County may contract with other jurisdictions to provide some local services to this area as appropriate.

Parks and farms are not necessarily good neighbors, since park users can trespass and damage crops, animals and farm equipment. Recreation near and within districts can be planned to prevent trespass. For example, a park located across a river or ravine from an Agricultural Production District (APD) or a farm would have a pleasant view of farmland without encouraging trespass.

### **KCCP POLICY R-546**

Active recreational facilities should not be located within Agricultural Production Districts. When new parks or trails are planned for areas within or adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts, King County should work with farmers to minimize impacts to farmland and agricultural operations.

Public road and utility projects within and through Agricultural Production Districts must be designed to prevent disruption to agriculture. For example, roads shall have adequate shoulders and signs to protect farm equipment and alert faster vehicles to the presence of farming activity. Therefore, road and utility district capital facilities and plans, including water, waste water and drainage, need to ensure that services are consistent with preservation of long-term agriculture. (Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, contains policies requiring special district plans to be consistent with land use plans.)

### **KCCP POLICY R-547**

Public services and utilities within and adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) shall be designed to minimize significant adverse impacts on agriculture and to maintain total farmland acreage and the area's historic agricultural character:

- a. Whenever feasible, water lines, sewer lines and other public facilities should avoid crossing Agricultural Production Districts. Installation should be timed to minimize negative impacts on seasonal agricultural practices; and
- b. Road projects planned for the Agricultural Production Districts including additional roads or the widening of roads should be limited to those needed for safety and which benefit agricultural

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uses. Where possible, arterials should be routed around the APDs. Roads that cross APDs should be aligned, designed and maintained to minimize negative impacts on agriculture, and to support farm traffic; and

- c. In cases when public or privately owned facilities meeting regional needs must intrude into Agricultural Production Districts, they should be built and located to minimize disruption of agricultural activity.

### **KCCP POLICY R-548**

Lands can be removed from the Agricultural Production Districts only when it can be demonstrated that:

- a. Removal of the land will not diminish the productivity of prime agricultural soils or the effectiveness of farming within the local APD boundaries; and
- b. The land is determined to be no longer suitable for agricultural purposes.

In addition to meeting these two tests, removal of the land from the APD may only occur if it is mitigated through the addition of agricultural land abutting the same APD of equal acreage and of equal or greater soils and agriculture value.

## **Section 2.      *Sustaining Agriculture and Farming***

King County has made a significant investment in preserving farmland for agriculture and open space uses. The next step is to help existing and future farmers maintain and operate their farms and inform consumers and businesses, such as restaurants, of the benefits of locally grown foods. In order to further maintain and enhance commercial farming on small farmland parcels, farmers and prospective farmers must have access to information on marketing and production strategies for small acreages, the potential for specialty crops and sustainable farming techniques.

### **KCCP POLICY R-549**

King County shall work with and provide support to the work of Washington State University Cooperative Extension for technical and marketing assistance for small-scale commercial farmers.

### **KCCP POLICY R-550**

King County shall continue to support innovative initiatives, such as the Puget Sound Fresh and Farm Link Programs, to promote and enhance agriculture in King County.

### **KCCP POLICY R-551**

The county should develop specific incentives to encourage agricultural activities in the remaining prime farmlands located outside the Agricultural Production District. These incentives could include tax credits, expedited permit review, reduced permit fees, permit exemptions for activities complying with best management practices or similar programs.

### **KCCP POLICY R-552**

King County shall develop an Agricultural Building Permit with an expedited review process and reduced fees for structures necessary for farm operations.

King County recognizes the importance of adding value to and direct sales of agricultural products as a way to keep agriculture viable in an urban landscape. King County's agriculture program works with farmers to encourage them to add value to their products by processing, packaging, and selling them directly to the consumer.

### **KCCP POLICY R-553**

Agricultural processing, packing and direct sales are considered agricultural activities and should be allowed at a size and scale appropriate to the zone in which they are operating. King County shall work with local and state health departments to develop regulations supporting these activities. Agricultural practices modify the natural environment in order to produce food or fiber or maintain livestock for human use. Ideally, practices that maintain the productivity of the lands also protect environmental quality. Farmers, technical advisors and environmental regulators must work together to understand the relationships between production practices, environmental protection and profitability. These practices, referred to as best management practices, are designed to prevent erosion, retain riparian vegetation, avoid stream bank collapse, properly dispose of animal wastes, safely use and dispose of pesticides and prevent excessive surface water runoff.

### **KCCP POLICY R-554**

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King County shall provide incentives, educational programs and other methods to encourage agricultural practices which maintain water quality, protect public health, protect fish and wildlife habitat, protect historic resources and prevent erosion of valuable agricultural soils while maintaining the functions needed for agricultural production.

### **FORESTRY RELATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

#### **In Section V, Resource Lands**

The Rural Forest Commission was established in 1997 to represent the diversity of forest interests in King County. The Commission reviews the development and implementation of strategies, programs, policies and regulations that benefit forestry and advises the county on ways to preserve rural forests and promote rural forestry.

#### **KCCP POLICY R-501**

The Rural Forest Commission shall advise the King County Executive and Council on the development of innovative programs, policies and regulations that benefit forestry and that encourage the retention of the forest land base in King County. King County shall continue to support the Rural Forest Commission with staff and other resources.

#### **Section B. Forestry**

King County forestlands provide local, regional and national benefits that are basic to our quality of life. In addition to supplying a variety of wood and other products, forests emit oxygen, supply pure water, control flooding and soil erosion, enhance groundwater recharge, provide habitat for innumerable plant and animal species and offer scenic vistas and recreational opportunities. King County's forests provide employment in wood, paper, recreation, tourism and fishing industries. In sum, properly managed forests are fundamental to a healthy, diverse economy and environment.

The growth in human population has resulted in the loss of forestlands through conversion to nonforest uses. Increasing demands are being placed upon the remaining forest land base to provide goods, recreational opportunities and ecological functions. To address these challenges, forest managers are embracing more broad-based management methods and strategies that encompass ecosystems, landscapes and watersheds, while continually incorporating new scientific information to improve these approaches. Their efforts, together with the collective foresight and dedication of landowners, interest groups, tribes, citizens and agencies, are needed to ensure that King County's forests continue to contribute to a sustainable way of life for present and future generations.

The first step to maintain and enhance the commercial forest industry is to protect the forest land base. Second, an ecosystem approach to forest management that provides for long-term ecosystem health and productivity and addresses cumulative impacts on nontimber resources should be explored. Third, commercial forestry must be supported and encouraged by minimizing land use conflicts and offering incentives. Finally, forestland conversions that do occur must be managed to minimize environmental degradation.

#### **Section 1. *Protecting Forest Lands***

The purpose of the Forest Production District is to prevent intrusion of incompatible uses, manage adjacent land uses to minimize land use conflicts and prevent or discourage conversion to nonforestry-based uses. A comparison of the area of forestland converted since 1987 inside the Forest Production District with the area converted outside the district indicates that landowners inside the Forest Production District are committed to long-term forestry. It also indicates that designation and zoning of commercial forest lands help to discourage subdivision and conversion.

Sixty percent of the land area in King County is within the designated Forest Production District (FPD). The FPD comprises 1,300 square miles (825,000 acres) of forestland in east King County.

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About 70% of the FPD is in public ownership: parts of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, state and county parks, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and watersheds for the cities of Seattle and Tacoma.

Commercial forestry is conducted on approximately 250,000 acres in private ownership and on another 277,000 acres of state and federal forestlands. Most of this land is held in large contiguous blocks. At this larger scale, it is easier to manage for multiple purposes such as habitat and long-term forest health.

### **KCCP POLICY R-519**

The Forest Production District is comprised of and shall remain in large blocks of contiguous forest lands where the primary land use is commercial forestry. Other resource industry uses, such as mining and agriculture, should be permitted within the Forest Production District when managed to be compatible with forestry.

### **KCCP POLICY R-520**

The Forest Production District is a long-term designation. Lands may be removed from the Forest Production District only through a subarea planning process, and only to recognize areas with historical retail commercial uses.

The policies in this section allow for very limited residential uses in the designated Forest Production District, consistent with the objective of continuing forestry as the primary land use. For example, residences may be appropriate to permit forest managers to live on their land. King County zoning and subdivision regulations establish a large parcel size to promote efficient forest operations and to reduce incompatible residential development. Although the zoning calls for an 80-acre minimum lot size, many smaller lots were created prior to application of the zoning. Proliferation of residences in the FPD makes commercial forestry less viable.

### **KCCP POLICY R-521**

King County is committed to maintaining working forestland in the FPD, and shall continue to work with landowners and other stakeholders to promote forestry, reduce uses and activities that conflict with resource uses and recognize forestland values.

### **KCCP POLICY R-522**

To reduce conflicts with resource uses, a forest management plan shall be required as a condition of development for any residential uses. Accessory dwelling units shall not be allowed in the FPD.

### **KCCP POLICY R-523**

Structures within the Forest Production District should be sited to maintain the productivity of the district. Site plan requirements should limit impervious surface, provide for fire control, protect domestic water supply and prevent conflicts with forest management.

King County can further protect commercial forestlands and prevent conflicts by working with other public agencies and service providers to consolidate lands and to locate infrastructure facilities to prevent or minimize intrusions. Such actions can also improve the owner's capacity to protect fish and wildlife habitat and other natural resources.

### **KCCP POLICY R-524**

In consultation with federally-recognized tribes and other affected agencies and landowners, King County should support land trades that result in consolidated forest ownership and work with forest managers to identify and develop other incentives for continued forestry.

### **KCCP POLICY R-525**

King County opposes the establishment or expansion of special purpose taxing districts and local improvement districts in the Forest Production District, and shall not grant new or expanded franchises for utilities in the Forest Production District, unless demonstrated that they directly benefit forestry or are necessary for transmission of power or water.

Forest lands have tremendous recreational and aesthetic value. For example, Forest Production District lands are included within the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway along the I-90 corridor. Opportunities for hiking and other forms of outdoor recreation exist within the working forests that are part of the Greenway. (This concept is described in more detail in Chapter Four, Environment, and

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Chapter Five, Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources.) Access to Natural Resource Lands must be carefully managed, however, to prevent conflict with natural resource goals. For example, open gate policies allowing public access may be incompatible with fish and wildlife protection goals and sometimes may interfere with forestry operations by allowing such activities as garbage dumping, vandalism and timber theft.

### **KCCP POLICY R-526**

Public and private forest owners are encouraged to provide for recreational, educational and cultural uses when compatible with forest protection.

Recreational and institutional developments, such as conference centers, ski areas and associated hotels, allow more people to enjoy the aesthetic benefits of forest lands. Such facilities are acceptable if located in areas of existing development, such as Snoqualmie Pass, and their operation and use are restricted adequately to minimize conflict with resource lands. Major recreational or institutional development sites can adversely affect the Forest Production District because they reduce the forest land base and conflict with other resource management goals.

### **KCCP R-527**

No master planned resorts shall be permitted in the Forest Production District. New or expansion of existing recreational or institutional uses in the Forest Production District may be permitted if compatible with long-term forestry, interests of federally-recognized tribes and other resource management goals.

Adverse environmental impacts associated with forest practices have the potential to heal over time, whereas those associated with development are usually irreversible. For this reason, forest lands being converted to nonforest uses must be held to higher land clearing and grading standards than those that apply under the Forest Practices Act must be used, for example, to protect surface and groundwater quality and quantity, control stormwater runoff and minimize damage to fish and wildlife habitat.

When applying for a forest practice permit, a landowner must state whether the land is to be retained in forest use or converted to a nonforest use. The Forest Practices Act, as amended in 1997, requires local jurisdictions to impose a six-year development moratorium on any properties for which the forest practice application did not state the intention to convert to a nonforest use, unless the application contains a conversion option harvest plan approved by the local jurisdiction.

### **KCCP POLICY R-528**

King County shall impose a six-year development moratorium for landowners who do not state their intent to convert at the time of Forest Practice Application or who do not harvest the site according to a King County approved Conversion Option Harvest Plan. King County shall develop a list of allowable exceptions from the development moratorium and shall ensure that potential buyers of properties subject to the moratorium are alerted to the moratorium.

Landowners choosing to convert their land to nonforest uses also must state their intent on the Forest Practice Application and, as provided in the Forest Practices Act, must conduct their forest practices according to applicable local government regulations. If a landowner intends to convert their land to a nonforest use, they must submit a Forest Practices Application to King County and meet all King County standards.

### **KCCP POLICY R-529**

King County should continue to work with all affected parties and the Washington Department of Natural Resources to improve the enforcement of forest practice regulations in the urban and rural areas, and to ensure that landowners comply with county regulations when they are converting portions of the site to a nonforest use. Harvesting of forest lands for the purpose of converting to nonforestry uses shall meet all applicable county standards for clearing and sensitive areas management.

## **Section 2. *Promoting Forest Management***

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King County has worked with state, federal, and private landowners on multiparty resource plans, such as the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Plan, the plan for Rattlesnake Ridge, and numerous watershed planning efforts. There will continue to be opportunities for interagency cross-ownership cooperation, which will result in improved resource management and conservation.

### **KCCP POLICY R-530**

Working with public and private forest land managers, King County shall encourage long-term forest productivity and the protection of land and water resources by participating in collaborative, multiownership planning efforts.

### **KCCP POLICY R-531**

King County promotes forest management that achieves long-term forest health, protection of watersheds, sensitive areas and habitat to support fish and wildlife populations, protection of threatened and endangered species, and preservation and economic viability of working forests.

### **KCCP POLICY R-532**

King County should work with the King County Rural Forest Commission to conduct a demonstration project for tree removal to reduce fire hazard in the Rural Area. The demonstration project should allow for a community based project in a carefully selected area using best management practices.

### **KCCP POLICY R-533**

King County shall encourage the development of private/public partnerships that provide incentive for landowners to practice innovative, fish-friendly forestry and that can help ensure retention of the forest resource land base in perpetuity.

An example of such a partnership is the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Biosolids Forestry Program, which includes King County, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Greenway Trust, the University of Washington and the Weyerhaeuser Company. One of the elements of this program involves the acquisition of forestlands that are vulnerable to residential and commercial development. Lands are acquired by a combination of county funds and federal Forest Legacy funds and then transferred to the State DNR for management. By deed, these lands stay in forest resource use in perpetuity and are managed according to the state's Habitat Conservation Plan. Seventy-five percent of all revenues generated are returned to King County. The lands that have been acquired help to form the block of public ownership along I-90, providing wildlife corridors, opportunities for trails and recreation, and the water quality protection provided by forest cover.

In addition to landscape-level planning and analysis, resource managers should identify specific areas in their forest ownership that are degraded or negatively impacting aquatic resources. Examples of such areas are logging roads or gravel mines no longer needed and scheduled to be abandoned or riparian zones that are not sufficiently vegetated. Organic soil amendments, when properly used, can greatly enhance vegetative growth and restore productivity to these sites, thus protecting fish and other aquatic resources. The use of recycled organic wastes generated in King County closes the recycling "loop" and helps us sustain the productivity of our resource lands.

### **KCCP POLICY R-534**

King County encourages the use of recycled, organic-based soil amendments and fertilizers in forest ecosystems, which can reduce erosion and sedimentation into streams, increase water-holding capacity of soils, stimulate the growth of trees and other vegetation and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. King County shall work with the general public and private and public forestland owners to encourage the selective and appropriate use of these materials for ecosystem enhancement and restoration.

One of the most successful efforts already underway is the use of the county's biosolids to fertilize public and private forests and the use of biosolids compost to help restore old logging roads in the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway in eastern King County. Volunteers from many local youth and environmental groups, including Earthcorp, are involved in this program, which involves removal of the logging roads, restoration of the natural slope of the land, and the use of compost to speed vegetation growth.

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### **HOME-BASED BUSINESSES RELATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

#### *Section 3. The Rural Economy*

An economic development strategy for the Rural Area can support and advance the unique characteristics of rural King County. It is critically important for the Rural Area to sustain the farming and forestry industries. The strategy needs to recognize the role of home businesses and industries as well as a range of other businesses and economic clusters that can be compatible with rural lifestyles and the rural character of the area. Rural economic development means maintaining and, where possible, increasing the flow of income to rural households and revenues to rural businesses and families.

#### **KCCP POLICY R-106**

King County recognizes and supports home occupations, home industries, and other small businesses that provide services to rural residents and are part of traditional rural economic activities and lifestyles found in King County's Rural Area. The county shall review its regulations and programs to preserve this component of the County's Rural Area. The Executive shall provide this analysis of the regulations and programs, along with any recommended code changes, for review by the King County Council by December 31, 2005.

#### *Section D. Nonresidential Uses*

While low-density residential development, farming and forestry are the primary uses in the Rural Area, some compatible public and private uses are appropriate and contribute to rural character. Compatible uses might include small, neighborhood churches, feed and grain stores, and home occupations such as small day care facilities or veterinary services. In addition, it may be necessary to locate some public facilities in rural areas, such as utility installations that serve rural homes. Any allowed nonresidential uses should be designed to blend with rural residential development and resource uses.

#### **KCCP POLICY R-221**

Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be limited to those that:

- a. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents;
- b. Require location in a Rural Area;
- c. Support natural resource-based industries;
- d. Provide adaptive reuse of significant historic resources; or
- e. Provide recreational opportunities that are compatible with the surrounding Rural Area.

These uses shall be sited, sized and landscaped to complement rural character as defined in policy R-101, prevent impacts to the environment and function with rural services including on-site wastewater disposal.

### **RURAL TOWNS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS RELATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

#### **Chapter Three, Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands**

##### **Subheading, King County's Rural Communities:**

King County's Rural Area, including communities such as the Hobart Plateau, Vashon Island, Snoqualmie Valley and Enumclaw Plateau, contains predominantly low-density residential development, farms, forests, watersheds crucial for both fisheries and flood control, mining areas, small cities and towns, historic sites and buildings, archaeological sites, and regionally important recreation areas. (Page 3-1)

#### **KCCP Policy R-221**

Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be limited to those that:

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- a. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents;
  - b. Require location in a Rural Area;
  - c. Support natural resource-based industries;
  - d. Provide adaptive reuse of significant historic resources; or
  - e. Provide recreational opportunities that are compatible with the surrounding Rural Area.
- These uses shall be sited, sized and landscaped to complement rural character as defined in policy R-101, prevent impacts to the environment and function with rural services including on-site wastewater disposal.

### **KCCP Policy R-222**

Golf facilities shall be permitted when located outside of Rural Forest Focus Areas, Regionally Significant Resource Areas and Locally Significant Resource Areas, as a conditional use, in the RA-2.5 and RA-5 zones.

### **Section B. Rural Towns**

Rural Towns are unincorporated towns governed directly by King County, but may provide a focal point for community groups such as chambers of commerce or community councils to participate in public affairs.

The purposes of the Rural Town designation are to recognize existing concentrations of higher density and economic activity in Rural Areas, whether by virtue of historical rural settlements or redesignation of an urban commercial center; provide a physical focus for the historic identity of rural communities; and to allow for modest growth of residential and economic uses within these designations if supported by the community and adequate utilities and other public services are available.

Although higher-density development in Rural Towns may require public sewers, applying the full range of urban development standards (e.g. for street improvements or landscaping) may not be necessary, and may not be consistent with the historic character of these communities. Although Rural Towns also may in some circumstances develop at densities similar to those in the Urban Growth Area or in rural cities, they are considered part of the Rural Area for purposes of the GMA, do not provide significant growth capacity, and are not subject to the growth targets adopted for the UGA.

### **KCCP POLICY R-403**

King County hereby designates the Rural Towns of Fall City, Snoqualmie Pass and the Town of Vashon as unincorporated Rural Towns. These historical settlements in unincorporated King County should provide services and a range of housing choices for Rural Area residents. The boundaries of the designated Rural Towns are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Adjustments to these boundaries shall only occur through a subarea planning process, and shall not allow significant increases in development potential or environmental impacts. No new Rural Towns are needed to serve the Rural Area.

### **KCCP POLICY R-404**

Commercial and industrial development that provides employment, shopping, and community and human services that strengthen the fiscal and economic health of rural communities should locate in Rural Towns if utilities and other services permit.

### **KCCP POLICY R-405**

Rural Towns may contain higher-density housing than permitted in the surrounding Rural Area, and should provide affordable and resource-worker housing if utilities and other services permit.

Development density in Rural Towns may approach that achieved in Rural Cities.

The policies in this section apply only to the unincorporated Rural Towns. King County encourages rural cities to adopt land use policies and development standards that protect and enhance their historical character.

### **KCCP POLICY R-406**

Rural Towns serve as activity centers for the Rural Area and may be served by range of utilities and services, and may include several or all of the following land uses, if supported by necessary utilities and other services and if scaled and designed to protect rural character:

- a. Retail, commercial and industrial uses to serve the surrounding Rural Area population and to provide support for resource industries and tourism;



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- b. Residential development, including single-family housing on small lots as well as multifamily housing and mixed-use developments;
- c. Other commercial and industrial uses, including commercial recreation and light industry; and
- d. Public facilities and services such as community services, churches, schools, and fire stations.

### KCCP POLICY R-407

Sewers may be allowed in Rural Towns if necessary to solve existing water quality and public health problems which cannot be addressed by other methods, provided that any extension of sewer mains from urban areas to serve a rural town shall be tightlined systems designed to not serve any intervening lands. All alternatives shall be exhausted before sewers may be allowed. Rural towns shall not be enlarged to facilitate provision of sewers.

Rural and urban residents alike value the historic character of King County's Rural Towns. New development can enhance the character and valuable features of Rural Towns through careful design and location.

### KCCP POLICY R-408

Rural Towns should be compact, promoting pedestrian and nonmotorized travel while permitting automobile access to most commercial and industrial uses. New development should be designed to strengthen the desirable characteristics and the historic character of the town, be supported by necessary public facilities and services, and be compatible with historic resources and nearby rural or resource uses. New industrial uses should locate where they do not disrupt pedestrian or bicycle traffic in established retail areas of town or conflict with residential uses.

## C. Rural Neighborhoods

Rural neighborhoods are small commercial developments, or in some cases, historic towns or buildings, that are too small to provide more than convenience shopping and services to surrounding residents. They generally do not have services such as water supply or sewage disposal systems any different from those serving surrounding rural development. Examples of rural neighborhoods include the store at Stillwater on the Carnation-Duvall Road, the town of Cumberland on the Enumclaw Plateau, and Preston.

### KCCP POLICY R-409

The rural neighborhoods designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map are small-scale business areas that should provide convenience shopping and services for the surrounding community. No new rural neighborhoods are needed to serve the Rural Area. Expansion of the boundaries of the existing rural neighborhoods shall not be permitted except through the subarea plan process.

The designated rural neighborhoods shown on the Land Use map are:

Bear Creek:	Cottage Lake and Redmond-Fall City Road/236th NE
East King County:	Greenwater, Baring and Timberlane Village
Enumclaw:	Cumberland, Krain's Corner and Newaukum
Newcastle:	Coalfield and East Renton Plateau
Snoqualmie:	Preston and Stillwater
Tahoma/Raven Heights:	Maple Valley, Hobart, Ravensdale and North Cedar Grove Road
Vashon:	Burton, Dockton, Tahlequah, Portage, Heights Dock, Jack's Corner, Vashon Center, Vashon Service Center, Vashon Heights and Maury Island Service Center

The policies in this section are based on a recognition of the limited size of most rural neighborhoods, the limited utilities and other services available to them, and a desire to preserve their existing character and relationship to the surrounding rural community.

### KCCP POLICY R-410

Rural neighborhoods should accommodate only small-scale retail, community and human services and personal service uses that provide convenience shopping and services to nearby Rural Area residents. If land suitable for residential development is included within the boundaries of a rural neighborhood, it should be zoned for rural residential development consistent with the residential development policies of this plan.

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### **KCCP POLICY R-411**

King County should adopt commercial development standards for rural neighborhoods that facilitate economic reuse of existing structures, minimize increases in impervious surfaces and encourage retention of historic character and scale. Urban-level parking, landscaping and street improvement standards are not appropriate for Rural Neighborhoods.

### **D. Nonresource Industrial Uses and Development Standards in the Rural Area**

There are two existing industrial areas in the Rural Area containing multiple industrial uses on several sites. One is located within the southwest portion of the Town of Vashon and the second is a designated industrial area adjacent to the rural neighborhood of Preston. The Preston Industrial Area recognizes an existing concentration of industrial uses that contributes to the economic diversity of the Rural Area, but expansion of this industrial area beyond the identified boundaries is not permitted (see policy C-941).

### **KCCP POLICY R-412**

New industrial uses in the Rural Area shall be permitted only in Rural Towns and in the designated industrial area adjacent to the Rural Neighborhood of Preston.

In order to preserve rural character and protect sensitive natural features, new rural industrial development needs to be of a scale and nature that is distinct from urban industrial development.

The scale and intensity and many of the uses allowed in urban industrial development are not appropriate for rural industrial areas. The following policy applies to all new industrial development in the Rural Area.

### **KCCP POLICY R-413**

Development regulations for nonvested industrial development in the Rural Area shall require the following:

- a. Greater setbacks, and reduced building height, floor/lot ratios, and maximum impervious surface percentage standards in comparison to standards for urban industrial development.
- b. Maximum protection of sensitive natural features, especially salmonid habitat and water quality.
- c. Building and landscape design that respects the aesthetic qualities and character of the Rural Area, and provides substantial buffering from the adjoining uses and scenic vistas.
- d. Building colors and materials that are muted, signs that are not internally illuminated, and site and building lighting that is held to the minimum necessary for safety.
- e. Heavier industrial uses, nonvested industrial uses producing substantial waste byproducts or wastewater discharge, or nonvested paper, chemical and allied products manufacturing uses in the urban industrial zone shall be prohibited.
- f. Industrial uses requiring substantial investments in infrastructure such as water, sewers or transportation facilities shall be scaled to avoid the need for public funding of the infrastructure.

The intent of this policy is to preclude expansion of the industrial area beyond the identified boundaries and to ensure that new development (not previously constructed or vested) in the industrial area meets rural character standards. Site design, landscaping, design and construction of internal and access roads and building scale should reinforce the set boundaries and rural nature of the industrial area to further discourage future industrial expansion beyond the industrial boundary.

There are also existing, isolated industrial sites in the Rural Area which are recognized, but are not appropriate for new industrial uses. Further expansion of these isolated industrial uses is not encouraged, and therefore they are not zoned Industrial.

### **KCCP POLICY R-414**

Existing industrial uses in the Rural Area outside of Rural Towns or the designated industrial area adjacent to the Rural Neighborhood of Preston shall be zoned rural residential but may continue if they qualify as legal, nonconforming uses.

## **RURAL CITIES RELATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

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### **Section A. Rural Cities**

King County's rural cities are incorporated areas whose local governments are involved in the region's planning processes on an equal legal basis with the suburban cities and Seattle. The incorporated rural cities are Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, Skykomish and Snoqualmie.

The Growth Management Act stipulates that rural cities and their Urban Growth Areas are to be treated as part of the Urban Growth Area. The Countywide Planning Policies also provide for urban land uses and densities and urban services in those locations. Excessive growth in rural cities and Rural Towns, however, may create pressure for extending urban services (for example, roads) across the Rural Area or Natural Resource Lands, may increase conversion pressure on nearby Natural Resource Lands and adversely affect rural character. Therefore, King County views rural cities as qualitatively different from the Urban Growth Area as a whole, even though they may provide significant opportunities for residential or employment growth.

King County has worked with the rural cities to establish Urban Growth Areas to accommodate growth. These areas are shown as part of the Urban Growth Area on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

#### **KCCP POLICY R-401**

The rural, incorporated cities and their Urban Growth Areas shall be considered part of the Urban Growth Area for purposes of planning land uses and facility needs. King County should work with rural cities to encourage the provision of affordable housing, to minimize the impacts of new development on the surrounding rural land and to plan for growth consistent with long-term protection of significant historic resources, the surrounding Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands.

#### **KCCP POLICY R-402**

Within Rural City Urban Growth Areas, the following uses shall be permitted until the area annexes to the city:

- a. Residential development at a density of 1 home per 5 acres or less with mandatory clustering; and
- b. Nonresidential development such as commercial and industrial as determined through previous subarea plans.

## **2. Applicable Countywide Planning Policies**

**The King Countywide Planning Policies provide broad policy direction for the comprehensive plans of all jurisdictions within King County.**

- FW-6 The land use pattern for the County shall protect the natural environment by reducing the consumption of land and concentrating development. Urban Growth Areas, Rural Areas, and resource lands shall be designated and the necessary implementing regulations adopted. This includes Countywide establishment of a policy planning boundary for the Urban Growth Area. Local jurisdictions shall establish these land use designations, based on the Countywide Planning Policies which are to be used as a framework for the adoption of the 1994 Metropolitan King County Comprehensive Plan.
- FW-7 Urban Growth Areas, Rural Areas, and resource lands shall be designated and the necessary implementing regulations adopted. This includes Countywide establishment of an Urban Growth Area. Local jurisdictions shall establish these land use designations, based on the Countywide Planning Policies.

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- FW-8 All jurisdictions acknowledge that Rural Areas provide an overall benefit for all residents of King County. Strategies to fund infrastructure and services in Rural Areas may be needed to support a defined rural level-of-service. Towns and cities in the Rural Areas play an important role as trade and community centers.
- FW-9 A fundamental component of the Countywide planning strategy is the maintenance of the traditional character of the Rural Area with its mix of forests, farms, high-quality natural environment, rural cities, unincorporated Rural Centers, and variety of low density residential uses. The basic elements of this rural character are:
- a. **NATURAL FEATURES.** Such as water bodies and significant wetlands, scenic resources and habitat areas should be afforded long-term protection, minimizing long-term environmental degradation, and enhancing environmental quality where previous degradation has occurred.
  - b. **RESOURCE-BASED INDUSTRIES.** Commercial and non-commercial farming, forestry, primary forest products manufacturing, mining and fisheries activities shall be encouraged to continue and to expand as possible.
  - c. **RURAL TOWNS.** Valued attributes of small towns such as: public safety; historical continuity; small, independent business; and local availability of goods and services shall be encouraged to continue.
  - d. **RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES.** Rural residents outside cities should anticipate lower levels of public services and infrastructure than those available in Urban Areas, maximizing self-sufficiency and independence.
  - e. **OPEN SPACE SYSTEM.** Significant components of King County's Open Space System are found in Rural Areas. Trail corridors, habitat networks, recreational areas and scenic resources should be linked wherever possible to complete the system. Active recreational facilities shall be rural in character. Where a traditional landscape of fields cleared for agricultural purposes exists, new development should be clustered at the edges of fields to minimize the consumption of agricultural land and possible conflicts with current or future farming activity.
  - f. **RURAL HOUSING.** The Rural Areas shall offer important alternative and qualitative housing choices but shall not be considered a quantitatively significant part of the County's residential growth capacity.
  - g. **RURAL ECONOMY.** The Rural Areas make a unique contribution to King County's economy. In addition to farming, fisheries and forestry, cottage industries shall be recognized as making a significant economic contribution in Rural Areas, and should be encouraged.
  - h. **CITIES.** Rural cities shall encourage, where appropriate, business opportunities which support the full range of rural activities occurring in their adjacent Rural Areas, including support services for agriculture and forestry. Cities should also provide a place for shopping, education, social services and other community functions at a scale consistent with the

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maintenance of rural character as well as the cities' household and employment target ranges.

- FW-10 To achieve and maintain rural character, King County, and the cities, as appropriate, shall use a range of tools including, at a minimum: land use designations, development regulations, level-of-service standards (particularly for infrastructure), and incentives.
- LU-6 Through the Countywide Planning Policy process, King County, with the cooperation of the cities, shall be responsible for designating Rural Areas consistent with Growth Management Act. In designating long-term Rural Areas, King County shall foster better use of limited public funds by allowing service providers to establish distinctly rural facility and service standards.
- LU-7 Designated Rural Areas are considered to be permanent and shall not be redesignated to an Urban Growth Area until reviewed pursuant to the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130 (3)) and policy FW-1. Future growth should be accommodated to the maximum extent feasible by efficient use of existing urban land within the Urban Growth Area. Annexation of Rural Areas to cities shall be prohibited. When annexation of Rural Areas is necessary to link two Urban Areas, that intervening Rural Area shall be designated as permanent urban separator at low rural densities.
- LU-9 Permitted land uses within designated Rural Area farming and forestry districts should be limited to residences at very low densities and farming or forestry-related uses. Institutional uses or public facilities should not be permitted except for the siting of utility lines where no feasible alternative exists and the siting of K-12 public schools and K-12 public school facilities in conjunction with K-12 Public Schools. Development of adjacent lands should be conditioned to minimize land use conflicts and conversion pressures upon these districts.
- LU-10 The Rural Area shall have low densities which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements, such as septic systems and rural roads. King County, cities adjacent to Rural Areas, and other agencies providing services to Rural Areas, shall adopt standards for facilities and services in Rural Areas that protect basic public health and safety, and enhance the environment, but urban facilities and services should not be provided to Rural Areas. Utilities, roads, and other infrastructure improvements may only be extended through Rural Areas to serve existing Urban Areas.
- LU-12 Planning for Rural Areas should comply with the following density guidelines:
- a. One home per 20 acres to protect forest lands when designated in accordance with policy LU-8.
  - b. One home per ten acres to protect lands for small-scale farming when designated in accordance with policy LU-8;

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- c. One home per ten acres is also appropriate if the predominant lot size is ten acres or larger and the lands are within one-quarter of a mile of a designated Forest Production District or lower-density Agricultural Production District with livestock-based agriculture or a legally-approved long-term mineral resource extraction site, or the lands contain significant environmentally constrained areas as defined by County ordinance or Federal or State law;
- d. One home per five acres where the land is physically suitable and can be supported by rural services; and
- e. Development on existing sub-standard lots in the Rural Area shall be permitted when applicable development standards, such as Board of Health regulations for on-site sewage disposal, can be met.

# **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

- 1) Rural Economic Strategies Public Meetings Announcement**
- 2) Public Meetings Summary**
- 3) Comments on Public Meetings Summary**
- 4) Other Written Comments Received**

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**APPENDIX C**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

**Rural Economic Strategies Public Meetings Announcement**



## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

### **Help Shape the Future of Rural King County!**

Spend an evening with your neighbors and help shape the future of rural King County. We are interested in your ideas about how to ensure the economic viability of the rural area while maintaining its character.

**To help shape the King County Rural Economic Strategies,  
we need your ideas on:**

- **Agriculture and agriculture production districts**
- **Forestry and forestry production districts**
- **Rural cities, towns, and neighborhoods**
- **Home occupations and cottage industries**
- **Tourism including recreation and equestrian uses**

**Please attend one of the following meetings:**

**July 12, 7:00 – 8:30 pm in South King County**  
The Fieldhouse at the King County Enumclaw Park  
28511 Enumclaw-Chinook Pass Road (Hwy 410), Enumclaw, WA

**July 21, 7:00 – 8:30 pm on Vashon Island**  
Multi-Purpose Room at Chautauqua Elementary School,  
9309 Cemetery Road SW, Vashon, WA

**July 26, 7:00 – 8:30 pm in North King County**  
Tolt Middle School, 3740 Tolt Avenue, Carnation, WA

Alternative formats and access available.

If you have any questions or need any additional information please feel free to contact the Rural Economic Strategies Coordinator, Julia Larson at 206-296-1062 or by email at [julia.larson@metrokc.gov](mailto:julia.larson@metrokc.gov).

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**APPENDIX C**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

**Summary of Public Meetings Comments**

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

### **Rural Economic Strategies Public Meetings Announcement PUBLIC MEETINGS SUMMARY**

This document contains a listing of the ideas and thoughts received during the three public meetings held to obtain rural resident and stakeholder participation into the Rural Economic Strategies. The meetings were held in three areas of the rural community:

- Southern King County in Enumclaw on July 12
- Vashon Island on July 21
- Northern King County in Carnation on July 26

Attendees were asked to provide information on opportunities and unmet needs around five economic clusters and this document is divided into those clusters, which are:

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Home Occupation / Cottage Industry
- Tourism / Recreation
- Rural Commercial Centers (which includes commercial & industrial uses)

Several ideas or thoughts that were raised during the public meetings do not fit into any one of the economic cluster and have been included in a table after the economic clusters. Readers will find a significant difference in style and content within the various tables, this is related to both the differences in thoughts of the meeting attendees and the fact that facilitators for each cluster changed with each meeting.

### **PLEASE REVIEW AND COMMENT**

We are asking rural residents and stakeholders to please review and comment on these ideas and thoughts. Attendees of the public meetings will be forwarded a copy of this document to review and comment on and a copy of this report will also be posted on the King County Website. In order for comments to be included in the initial draft of the Rural Economic Strategies report, comments need to be received by the Office of Business Relations and Economic Development no later than August 31. If you are on-line you can click on <http://apps01.metrokc.gov/www/go/comment.cfm> to send comments or you can reference the contact information at the end of this document.

Public review and comment will again be solicited after the initial Rural Economic Strategies report is drafted, thus rural residents and stakeholders will have additional opportunities to input into this process.

As will be seen throughout this document, there is a concern on the part of rural residents and stakeholders that they are not being listened to. This is your opportunity

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to provide direction into the development of the rural economic strategies. Please forward ideas and recommendations on projects, programs, and partnerships that can help make the rural economic strategies effective. Thank you.

### THE AGRICULTURE CLUSTER

#### Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Cattle	<p>Grazing of cattle is the main economically viable agriculture activity in the Enumclaw Agricultural Production District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Labor costs are too high to support crops.</li><li>- Sheep, unless they are Romney's or a few other breeds, will get foot disease.</li><li>- The lack of drainage on the Osceolla mudflow means that animals have to be off the land 6 months of the year. Generally a sacrifice area is needed or the pasture land will be trashed.</li></ul> <p>There is nothing new on the economics of raising cattle. Therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- On the revenue side, direct marketing is the best way to earn a profit.</li><li>- The Sales Pavilion acts as a middleman for feeder sales and cull cows.</li><li>- Other livestock sales generally take place in Centralia; however the four hour trip cuts into profit margins.</li><li>- The majority of cattle raisers have other jobs, thus they need a coop and/or access to a mobile slaughter unit like the one in Duvall.</li><li>- Additionally, because of limited time spent on cattle, the majority can not pursue the value added benefits of purebreds: as the return comes from having the time to show the animals.</li></ul> <p>On the expense side, the government can't do anything about grain costs. The only thing government can do is lower taxes. Agriculture gets a partial break on property taxes, and then the special service assessments hit us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Storm water fee</li><li>- Conservation District assessment</li><li>- Drainage districts</li></ul> <p>These fees can add up to around \$4,000 on 30 acres, therefore the attendees recommend that KC assess by parcel and do a flat fee.</p>
New Generation of Farmer	<p>There is a new generation of farmer in the Enumclaw and Snoqualmie regions, they raise both crops and animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The majority of these farmers lease land as they can't afford to buy it. Governments tend to make the argument that by allowing agricultural zoning into smaller parcels, individuals should be able to afford to buy land for farming or cattle.</li><li>- Free range poultry are a good specialty market; however, they lose value when they become a commodity.</li><li>- They also have a need for a mobile slaughter unit.</li><li>- Need research and marketing efforts to keep produce and poultry out of commodity market and in the specialty market, where a profit can be made.</li><li>- Would like to see more local meat and processed food at markets: milk, butter, cheese, etc.</li><li>- A \$300,000 grant from USDA could be used to put in processing facilities, however it would need effective leadership make it work.</li><li>- Evaluate the needs of the growth in ethnic markets demands (note: religious</li></ul>

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	<p>kill techniques would make a difference in marketing and sales).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate and apply steps similar to Canada for wineries where they put into place marketing and advertising campaigns and funding and made zoning changes.</li> </ul>
Government Issues to support Agriculture	<p>There are specific government issues to be addressed if we are to better support agriculture as an economic activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We need to know what the requirements are for wineries - the federal and county regulations do not agree.</li> <li>- Story told, of someone following regulations, being refused permits, therefore relocating store front to Pierce County side of property, and King County is now losing the sales taxes.</li> <li>- The taxes make hard cider too expensive to produce.</li> <li>- State, county and federal regulations need to be more uniform to enable the siting of a winery incubator. There is a group who would use one.</li> <li>- There are only two counties in the country that grade lamb. King Co is one of them. Why?</li> <li>- There needs to be better coordination between WSDA and USDA on inspection requirements for agricultural buildings. WSDA inspects the premises, USDA inspects the meat. We pay for both of them. One entity could do them together and charge by the hour.</li> <li>- What is considered "value added" vs. a farm activity?</li> </ul>

## Vashon Meeting – Agriculture

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Micro farming	Encourage more micro farming; explore viable models, strategies, and ideas.
APD or TDR	Evaluate opportunities for an agriculture production district (APD) or use of transfer development rights (TDR) on Vashon
Tax dollars distribution	<p>Use a portion of Vashon tax dollars on Vashon and earmark a portion of those for agriculture ... use for following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compost facility</li> <li>- seed exchange</li> <li>- internship program</li> <li>- Micro loan program for start up farmers.</li> </ul>
Agricultural options to explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dairy processing cooperative</li> <li>- Member owned food cooperative</li> <li>- Tool cooperative</li> <li>- Labor Cooperative</li> <li>- Dollars to hire an Agriculture Coordinator for Vashon farmers</li> </ul>
Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An issue for farm labor because of high cost of housing and transportation (possible have free ferry and/or bus passes for farm labor)</li> <li>- Change land covenants that restrict affordable housing</li> <li>- Relax zoning and codes to allow various types of multi-family housing</li> </ul>
Local currency	Develop a local currency

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Access to insurance	Enhance access to insurance, especially for labor force
More land under cultivation	Increase land areas under cultivation
Animal control	Problems with deer, peacocks, and other animals
Property taxes	Property taxes are too high and are forcing farmers to sell out
Needed Facilities	Vashon needs a commercial kitchen and a mobile slaughter unit

### **Carnation Meeting – Agriculture**

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Weddings in Ag	Allow weddings to be held in the agriculture zone
Permitting of farm processing facilities	Ability to build a farm processing facility without a hard permit process
Schools on farms	Allow for a school on a farm
Organic farming	Support increase in organic farming, can use the "Quillisascut farm" as a model
Farm worker housing	Provide for worker housing on farms
Farmer home on farm	Allow farmer to live on the farm, even in the flood plain
Low income housing	Access to low income housing
Assistance with business plans	Assistance with business plans for farmers

## **THE FORESTRY CLUSTER**

### **Enumclaw Meeting**

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Forestry Vital to Enumclaw region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forestry has played a vital role in the economic health of the Enumclaw region.</li> <li>- There has been a dramatic change in forestry in recent years.</li> <li>- Enhancement of forestry in the region should be evaluated as part of this process.</li> <li>- There is a large work force of trained forest production individuals in the Enumclaw region.</li> </ul>

### **Vashon Meeting – Forestry**

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Add Capacity	Add capacity to milling, kilning, planning, & finishing for final use on Vashon without having to go off-island for resources (trees) or services (workers & infrastructure).
Marketing	Encourage local use of local wood
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Island lumber, community demand for local wood, grab builders</li> <li>- Institute for Environmental Research &amp; Education (IERE) can help with planning, education and outreach.</li> </ul>
Sustainable Vashon	Sustainable Vashon for economic development – get publicity in local paper.
Chamber	Get assistance from Chamber of Commerce to help with marketing local wood.
KC / Built Green	KC to continue pressure on Built Green to give multiple points for local grown, local milled, local built.
Local involvement	Involve, encourage, and provide outreach to local forest landowners to utilize local forest expertise and services.
Grant Support	Need development support for grants ... find grants that will fund local workers in job development ... re-do brochure, develop logo, find graphics donations.
KC and/or state funding & support	Obtain County funding for affordable housing based on local grown, local milled, local built or state funding.
Small footprint housing	Consider alternative or small footprint housing.
Appropriate harvests	Encourage patch cut, thinning, or whatever is appropriate for particular job
Approach to Economic development	Urban mentality writing and planning for rural areas – misses the boat!
Business Plan Assistance	Business plan assistance for groups such as the Vashon Forest Stewards.
Forest Stewards	More people on board of Forest Stewards with financial backgrounds.
Tax Relief	Tax relief for building sustainable structures, maintaining a green home, or retrofitting to green.

### Carnation Meeting – Forestry

(Note: this group addressed numerous issues that will all be listed here, as little of the group discussion focused on forestry)

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Permits - Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Should be easier and less expensive to get a permit for harvesting through the county.</li> <li>- Hazard tree issue should be able to be resolved without getting a permit, through the county forester – do same way as state process</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest thinning should be short prescriptive permit, should not trigger moratorium.</li> <li>- Forest practice permits should be processed within two weeks unless substantive sensitive areas require additional information</li> </ul>
Permits - Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Look at things permits are required for such as water heaters, toilets, small buildings, and outbuildings; eliminate unnecessary requirements.</li> <li>- Permit structure too costly and slow for jobs being accomplished.</li> <li>- What is the purpose of the permit?</li> </ul>
Lack of trust	Lack of trust in engaging in dialog with KC due to previous input on CAO being ignored.
What will be done with input here	What really will be done with the input from these meetings?
Too many county staff at meeting	Too many county staff here, too many dollars in planning ... this budget could be put to better use in rural law enforcement.
Impacts of CAO urban	The very impacts that the CAO was trying to regulate were, for the most part occurring in the urban areas and thus should be regulated in the urban areas.
Sheriff's budget	Budget and funding for sheriff to eliminate criminal rural "economic" activities which are degrading the area and polluting.
Science	Require science be obtained from objective scientist under contract rather than county employees
Accountability	Clearly stated purpose, accountability, and open and honest communication is needed.
Economic Strategy	When considering economic strategy, you should be contrasting way rural area was 50 – 75 years ago with infrastructure support for rural industry (farming, logging, gravel) making up the rural town. Today rural area is a bedroom community.
Property Maintenance	Main industries today should be property maintenance – building, remodeling, landscaping, thinning, septic and well maintenance, house cleaning, vet, etc.
Affordable housing	Support workers require affordable housing (includes some of those occupations listed above in property maintenance).
Presentation	Felt lectured to in the opening – resented that. Presentation caused some individuals to tune out.
Facilitators	Facilitator in previous group did not understand the issues causing rural citizens concern, had to educate county employee before our issues were recorded, frustrating to input.
KC has Plan then comes to citizens	Sense that KC has a plan and then comes to the people. Need to engage people in the process, address their issues, and <u>then follow through</u> .
Citizens carrying baggage	Meetings have not been able to be brought to closure. People are now carrying baggage.
Lost input	KC has missed/not heard/lost very valid important input through this poor communication model.

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Disagreement with KC equals being negative	Citizens feel that any time they disagree with the county they are labeled as "being negative".
Communication	Even government to government communication is not working.
Relationships	"A little at time ... then all at once" It is all about relationships. Those relationships need to be re-established, rebuilt, and then nurtured through open and honest communication.
Interact with landowners	KC should fund staff to interact with land owners.

## THE HOME OCCUPATION / COTTAGE INDUSTRIES CLUSTER

### Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Types of Businesses to Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Day Care Centers</li> <li>- Consulting Businesses</li> <li>- Working from home for larger business, corporation, medical center, etc.</li> <li>- On-line (such as E-Bay)</li> <li>- Arts &amp; Crafts</li> </ul>
Ability to make a profit	Being able to make a profit from their business in the rural area is often difficult, however the reasons vary.
Obtaining Necessary Supplies	Often difficult to obtain and/or store necessary supplies and materials for business.
Foreign Competition	Many home occupations cannot succeed due to imported products being cheaper than they can provide and other foreign competition issues.
Web Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem with connectivity to either broadband or wireless for computer access and additional issue of security of information, especially in sales.</li> <li>- KC should coordinate and help apply pressure so everyone in KC has access.</li> </ul>
Marketing Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need assistance both with marketing plans and marketing of products or services to a larger audience.</li> <li>- Would also like assistance in coordinating and providing information about festivals, events, etc throughout the county.</li> </ul>
Information	Develop a place on KC Website where individuals can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find out about business opportunities that will work in the rural area,</li> <li>- Share information with others doing the same type of business,</li> <li>- Advertise events or sales of the services or products, and</li> <li>- Highlight successful rural businesses.</li> </ul>
Assistance in developing Cooperatives	Need help in bringing interested individuals together to develop cooperatives for services or products. How to set up, how to manage, developing business plans, developing marketing strategies, etc.
Code Revisions	Change codes related to home occupations so that there is more flexibility in the

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	rural areas of the county, especially for unique businesses, such as allowing a large swimming pool for swimming lessons.
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### Vashon Meeting – Home Occupations/Cottage Industries

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Connectivity	Need for connectivity to cable, wireless and support for technical assistance for computer work from home.
Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for technical assistance</li> <li>- Marketing Plans</li> <li>- Networking with others or within specific businesses</li> <li>- Where possible use local (on island) talent</li> </ul>
Cooperative marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate and explore opportunities for cooperative marketing opportunities to add value to home occupations.</li> <li>- Market local businesses to other local businesses and residents.</li> </ul>
Training	Skill sets are needed; work with schools and others on occupational training.
Asset mapping	Community asset mapping should be conducted
Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vashon Island "Brand" should be developed</li> <li>- Then keep it "Vashonable"</li> </ul>
Cooperative attitude	A cooperative attitude should be developed on Island for all businesses.
Isolationism	Break down Isolation
Bed & Breakfast Inns	Need additional Bed and Breakfast Inns
Eco-Tourism	Encourage small businesses that support ecological projects and sustainable Vashon.
Water issues	Training or materials about effective use of water / water conservation.
Directory	Develop a directory of who is here and what they do.
Renter needs	Renter needs should be explored and addressed on Island.
Quality of Life	Do want to lose the existing quality of life on Island.

### Carnation Meeting – Home Occupations/Cottage Industries

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Business Options in the Rural Area, may require some code changes to offer these types of needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roofing and gutter repair</li> <li>- Welding</li> <li>- Small engine repair</li> <li>- Large motors repair (diesels, gas, electric)</li> <li>- Irrigation system</li> </ul>

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services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locksmiths</li> <li>- Carpentry</li> <li>- Tree service</li> <li>- Fireplace wood supplies</li> <li>- Blacksmith</li> <li>- Window / Glass installation &amp; repair</li> <li>- Auto glass</li> <li>- Excavation</li> <li>- Electricians</li> <li>- Electronic services such as computer repair</li> <li>- Janitorial services / House cleaning</li> <li>- Septic Systems installation &amp; repair</li> <li>- Mobile Vets</li> </ul>
Large business is given priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel that big businesses are able to get permits easily, yet have greater environmental impacts than small businesses.</li> <li>- Feel that small businesses pay proportionally more for their permits in time, money, and stress.</li> <li>- Feel that small businesses are "run out of the county" by large commercial developers or businesses.</li> <li>- Significant increasing property values and tax increases in the rural area hurt small business or drive them out.</li> <li>- Fewer customers for small business.</li> <li>- Feel small local businesses are being bought out by big companies.</li> </ul>
Cable access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel that cable internet fees are double for small business vs. residential use.</li> <li>- Need a cooperative to give businesses access to services.</li> </ul>
Concern about significant road improvements	Local rural communities have to pay in time, money, and quality of life to protect rural area from infrastructure changes demanded by big business, such as 2 lane road becomes a 4 lane road with traffic light.
Urban/Suburban dwellers have stake in rural areas	Urban/Suburban dwellers have a stake in preserving the rural areas. These folks need to understand that without their interest and support, the rural areas will disappear. By helping to sustain the rural area, they are ensuring the amenities found in the rural area for everyone.
Change in Home Occupation Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hosting weddings on property</li> <li>- Limit on number of employees either on site or that can work for you off site.</li> <li>- No equipment over 1.5 tons by KC Code and cannot park one backhoe and 1 truck on property.</li> <li>- Number of on site customers, should be able to vary on case by case basis.</li> <li>- Regulations developed for urban/suburban areas, need additional flexibility in rural area.</li> </ul>
Conditional Use Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel requirements for conditional use permits are cost prohibitive and not all really apply to rural area, such as putting in a driveway to city standards that will only handle 10 cars a day.</li> <li>- Sole proprietor may need conditional use permit just to store equipment or to telecommute.</li> <li>- Review regulations for applicability to "rural area needs".</li> </ul>
Lack of follow-	Feel that KC does not follow-through on meetings of this sort where input is

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through after holding community meetings	sought from local citizens and stakeholders.
Creative experts and dollars	Need dollars to hire creative minds to help rural businesses.

## THE TOURISM / RECREATION CLUSTER

### Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Tourism	Rural areas can capitalize on boom in eco-tourism ... rural areas are the gateways to King County's ecological assets.
Attractions, services	Rural communities have the ability to offer attractions and services ... get people to stop in town on the way
Travel dollars	In addition to the activities themselves, many eco-tourists also spend a lot on travel, in general.
Related businesses	Equestrian, mountain biking, etc. require equestrian services, horse trailers, equipment shops, repair shops, etc., building markets for new businesses specific serving various activities.
Interjurisdictional Initiatives	The region could do more interjurisdictional planning, something like a "Getting Connected" Initiative... making all the connections on the rural trail networks that connect to the regional trails.
Awareness of assets	Existing destinations, tourism opportunities around county are not well known or advertised, sometimes even local rural residents or rural political leaders are unaware of assets. User groups seem to have the most knowledge of worthwhile destinations.
Marketing resources	Even when destinations are known, marketing budgets are minimal or non-existent in order to capitalize on those assets.
Trail heads / Parking	Many spectacular destinations do not have trail heads or parking, a relatively low expense item for potential high return as an eco-tourism resource (easier to locate, market, etc). Lack of parking and centralized hubs spreads users out along country roads or on sensitive lands which creates safety issues and also represents a lost opportunity for revenue (services at hubs).
KC Volunteer Policies / Resources	King County volunteer program is understaffed and is not fully leveraging resources of rural community. Volunteer policies, risk policies, and labor restrictions severely limit possible contributions by rural residents whom have much more to offer than typical urban volunteers (i.e. heavy equipment, raw materials, etc.)
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects ... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped or under utilized.

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Planning	With the exception of trails, there is no short-term or long term planning by KC in relation to eco-tourism and recreation opportunities among its rural assets.
Trail connections	There are too many small connections that have not been made.
Risk management	Risk management is a barrier to many opportunities ... there is too much fear related to public access and use of assets.
Continuum of O&M and design standards	There should be a sliding scale along the level of design standards and O&M standards among urban and rural assets ... rural areas do not want or need highly manicured, perfect parks or trails and the high O&M that comes with that.
Paving	Trails should not be paved in the rural areas ... paved trails are an urban preference, rural areas do not want paved trails and they only add to the costs.
Terrain	The rural areas sit in the heart of or at the edge of, the best terrain and topography in King County for eco-tourism, adventure recreation, etc.
Organized groups	King County's user groups are extremely versatile, skilled, and resourceful ... (i.e. BBTC, Backcountry Horsemen, etc.) and KC should make use of these resources.
Natural areas	Rural communities are the gateways to King County's natural areas.
Trails	While disconnected in some areas, there is an amazing collection of trails that can connect adventurers between rural communities and their eco-tourism and adventure destinations.
Existing inventory	There is an amazing existing inventory of destinations, both developed and undeveloped, known and unknown on which to build an economic development plan based on eco-tourism and adventure recreation.
KC Volunteer Staff	King County needs more staff for its volunteer program ... both for on the ground coordination, but also to focus on policy development that addresses current limitations.
Grants to rural areas	The number and amounts of flexible grants available to rural areas needs to be dramatically improved at the State and County level.
Marketing	Rural communities need help from user groups to identify existing eco-tourism assets as well as, the development needs of those assets ... KC needs to help rural communities to enhance and market those existing assets.
King County Leadership	KC needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.
Keep existing grants programs	Keep recreation and other community grants coming ... these are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation.
Access to research, data	KC should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural organizations and communities.
Stop paving trails	Stop paving trails in rural areas.

### Vashon Meeting – Tourism/Recreation/Equestrian

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Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Limiting factor	Transportation costs to the island, high cost of ferries
Areas of focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arts &amp; markets for local artists</li> <li>- Sculpture parks</li> <li>- Bicycle systems should be separate whenever possible from vehicle lanes</li> <li>- Bicycle tours of the Island</li> <li>- Kayaking</li> <li>- Services including restaurants and Bed &amp; Breakfast Inns</li> </ul>
Reasons people recreate on Vashon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shoreline &amp; water access</li> <li>- Remote</li> <li>- Quiet</li> </ul>
Signage	Need directional and consistent signage of park and recreation facilities on Island
Water Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vashon is part of the Water Trail and this recreational asset should be emphasized and built upon.</li> <li>- Maury Island Marine Park is currently underdeveloped; also have Winghaven and Spring Beach.</li> </ul>
Eco-Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support tourism efforts that support the environment and sustainable education.</li> <li>- Promote items such as a "permaculture" or sustainability demonstration.</li> </ul>
Recreation threshold	Evaluate recreation in terms of quantity versus quality ... determine thresholds.
Equestrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Currently about 3 to 4,000 horses on Vashon</li> <li>- Look at network of horse trails</li> <li>- Island Center Forest</li> </ul>
Festival coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordination of festivals and recreational events on Island</li> <li>- Maximize potential tourism opportunities</li> <li>- Possibly charge slightly higher fee for festivals and pay volunteers</li> <li>- Strawberry Festival should focus on local vendors and limit outsiders</li> </ul>
Hiking trail network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect the network of hiking trails on Island, almost complete, some cross private land areas and are known to locals.</li> <li>- Set up similar to hiking trails in England.</li> </ul>
Encourage "passive" recreation	Recommend that the Island focus on encouraging passive recreation activities rather than aggressive tourist activities.
Library as resource	Library is great resource of tourism activities on Island, this resource could be enhanced for eco-tourism.
Quality of life	Concern about maintaining the existing quality of life on Vashon.
Sustain Existing Businesses	Need to sustain existing businesses
PUD	Develop a PUD for sewer system on island.
Diversity of Workforce	Concerns about providing housing, transportation, etc., to maintain a diverse workforce on the Island.

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Affordable housing	Need for affordable housing for workers.
Displacement of population	Concern about displacement of existing populations due to increase in land values and taxes. Should monitor and check, especially people on fixed incomes.
Data base	Recommend that we create a system of metrics so that we have a base line data base upon which to measure the impacts of changes ... the data base should include items such as work force, vehicles, decibel levels, population concentrations, traffic counts, foot traffic, number of people at facilities, etc.
Sustainability	Vashon has an interest in becoming totally sustainable ... work, live, and recreate on the Island.

### Carnation Meeting – Tourism/Recreation/Equestrian

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Continuity of Trail System	Continuity of trail system – linkage from each type of trail (hiking, equestrian, cycling). An issue in this area is concerns about trail and recreation access where potential uses cross from public to private and back into public access again.
Private/Public Trail and Recreation Access	Need for better linkage and interface between public and private lands for trail corridors.
Equestrian	Equestrian – the equestrian community would like to see a series of trails for equestrian use in the region. Additionally there is the issue with access points to the trails having sufficient parking for trucks and horse vans at the access points.
Provide more multi-use trails	Build more multi-use trails, encourage tourism related to outdoor recreation activities, develop recreational easements to insure trail development on private lands – (similar to development rights but an easement in support of recreational activities on public, private and non-profit owned lands)
Launch Point Services	Numerous individuals stated that trail and recreation access launch points need several items including sufficient parking, restroom facilities, and when appropriate other amenities such as picnic facilities, trash facilities, possible equipment rentals (bikes, canoes, kayaks, etc), sundries and supplies.
Access Issues & Development Rights	Access issues and development rights, how to insure continued or new public/trail access when lands are saved for “environmental” or working forest reasons.
Balancing Recreation with Environmental Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong concern over balancing recreation opportunities with environmental priorities – loss of recreation access due to “salmon habitat projects” – access to rivers and increased recreational opportunities at a time when the county and state are focused on wildlife rather than people.</li> <li>- Habitat vs. recreation – concern expressed that we are out of balance toward protection</li> </ul>
Community partnerships	Numerous individuals would like to see the continuation of the various recreation and other community grants and partnership opportunities. Explore opportunities to expand the grants and increase the funding to allow for more significant economic development projects related to recreation.



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River Recreation Access	Provide more and better recreational access areas to the rivers in the region.
Paradise Valley	Open up Paradise Valley ASAP for biking.
Tiger Mountain	Open more of Tiger Mountain to a variety of trail users ASAP.

## THE RURAL COMMERCIAL CENTERS ECONOMIC CLUSTER

### Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Access to funding	Rural areas need more access to regional funding for rural economic development
Grant limitations	Grants need to have less restrictions, more control at local / rural level.
Tax revenue	In many rural areas, tax revenues are not keeping up with current costs... thus local investment in economic development on top of current cost is difficult, thereby continuing the revenue shortage cycle.
Rapid development	In some areas of rural King County, rapid residential development outpacing key economic development opportunities by taking prime property.
Lack of data, research	Many rural areas do not have adequate access to data (demographics, marketing research, consumer profiles, etc.) to develop meaningful economic development plans.
Jurisdictions	Jurisdictional lines, tax bases, etc. are not conducive to interjurisdictional cooperation... It is difficult for Enumclaw to invest outside its borders into King County, and difficult for King County to invest within Enumclaw making joint projects difficult.
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped.
KC Direction / Leadership	There is not enough KC leadership, coordination, or proactive positive contributions in rural areas... only mandates, restrictions, levies, etc.
Attractions, services	Rural communities have the ability to offer attractions and services ... get people to stop in town on the way.
Related businesses	Equestrian, mountain biking, etc. require equestrian services, horse trailers, equipment shops, repair shops, etc. building markets for new businesses specific serving various activities.
Natural areas	Rural communities are the gateways to King County's natural areas.
King County Leadership	King County needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.

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Keep existing grants programs	Keep ADOP, YSFG, and other community grants coming ... these are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation
Access to research, data	King County should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural communities

### Vashon Meeting – Rural Commercial Centers

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Word usage	Use terminology Commercial & Neighborhood Centers
Partnering	Partner with schools for job fairs
Business contributions to communities	Businesses should help underwrite costs of community needs, such as tax from wine purchases could go to affordable housing.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Campaign to shop on Vashon</li> <li>- Sustained marketing campaign – Brand Vashon</li> </ul>
Business Expansion	Which businesses and how
Downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate 80-20 formula for businesses, there is turnover</li> <li>- Continuity of downtown area</li> </ul>
Industrial lands	<p>Recruit light manufacturing to the island (low/medium wage jobs) Synergy between existing industries for business opportunities and environmental strategies ... consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recycling</li> <li>- Value-added forest products</li> <li>- New environmental friendly policies</li> <li>- Alternative energy possibilities</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider both public and private transportation facilitation</li> <li>- Ferry System – Connection buses with ferries schedule ... 40% of riders are commuters</li> </ul>
Small business incubators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resource centers, sources for capital for small business</li> <li>- Maximizing existing resources, such as libraries and colleges</li> <li>- Good vocational education</li> <li>- Innovative strategies for local job creation</li> <li>- Ability of small business to get small business loans</li> <li>- KC assistance for small business – maybe an advisory group for input</li> <li>- Example: Island spring Tofu</li> </ul>
Attract new businesses to Island	Attract independent small businesses to island that will maintain character of island.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need infrastructure to support any type of island development – have projections for growth and needs to address that growth.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easy information access for current public funds used on Vashon each year, input for dollars spent.</li> <li>- Infrastructure development – septic, PUD's.</li> <li>- Incorporate UW septic system that is affordable into KC code (\$12,000 per system).</li> <li>- Issues with second home owners (absentee home-owners).</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote / Encourage mother-in-law type apartment and cottages.</li> <li>- How can property taxes and land valuation support affordable housing?</li> </ul>
KC Departments need to Communicate	Different KC Departments need to communicate and coordinate more, permits, codes, etc.
Proactive Leadership from KC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need proactive leadership from KC on perception of government.</li> <li>- Mitigate adversarial perceptions in rural areas towards KC.</li> </ul>

## Carnation Meeting – Rural Commercial Centers

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
City Business Revenue Sources	Protect city business revenue sources. (Will rural areas be rezoned so new businesses in unincorporated areas draw business away from established cities?)
Farming now niche or boutique market	The County appears to think of preserving agriculture as it was in the 1950's and it is now more like the Remlinger Farms model—appealing to a niche or boutique market.
Small business models	Duvall's small businesses are a model for what makes sense—a small Washington wine tasting boutique and a quilt shop.
Support Small Business	Support small business owners.
Impact of CAO	The Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) is causing rural cities and towns to absorb a lot of growth) Urbanization of rural cities is being hastened and putting a great deal of stress on existing cities.
Event Promotion	It's too difficult to promote events. (WSDOT should permit banners to be hung across the state highway).
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a lack of public transportation options.</li> <li>- There should be transit circulation through the Valley (like the Issaquah circulator buses).</li> </ul>
Communication Valley-wide	Support communication through the Valley. There should be a Valley promotion website.
Service	Provide services of real value to customers.
Affordable Housing	Need for affordable housing.
Rural cites and towns do not have enough resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel that rural cities and towns do not have the resources to do thorough planning, such as the pressures on Carnation to provide sewers ... this need will take priority away from future of strawberry fields.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need sewers to improve the downtown businesses, but will then bring in big business.</li> <li>- Problem boils down to not having enough money to pay for economic growth and protecting the rural economy, example is depressed downtown Carnation.</li> <li>- Small down economies are fragile and vulnerable to any change, such as one major business going under because their building burned</li> <li>- Dollars are needed to help small community's problem solve key planning issues in order to preserve their rural identity.</li> <li>- Communities are often forced to decide between economic survival and rural character.</li> </ul>
Creative thinking	Need dollars to hire creative minds to help rural businesses

### IDEAS / THOUGHTS THAT FALL OUTSIDE THE CLUSTERS

Several items for discussion were raised by individuals that do not necessarily fit within the economic clusters are presented below.

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing is a significant concern for rural residents, both for those individuals and families living on a fixed income and for those individuals who work at low to moderate income jobs. Numerous individuals who live in the rural area work two or three jobs.
Affordable Housing Options (Vashon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitate affordable housing (zoning, land, water, property tax evaluations)</li> <li>- Study public attitude regarding affordable housing</li> <li>- Share information about affordable housing</li> </ul>
Transportation in rural areas	Consider both public and private transportation facilitation
Urban Growth Boundaries	Concern was expressed that this process was designed to allow significant development to occur outside of the existing urban growth boundaries. (Note: that is not the intent of this process and it is anticipated that no changes to the urban growth boundary will occur as the result of this process, except possibly around the Town of Skykomish, and only if the town requests such a change.)
Visions	Help create a "Vision" for each of the distinct communities within rural KC to try and help these areas maintain their unique characteristics.
Access to funding	Rural areas need more access to regional funding for rural economic development
Grant limitations	Grants need to have less restrictions, more control at local / rural level
Tax revenue	In many rural areas, tax revenues are not keeping up with current costs... thus local investment in economic development on top of current cost is difficult, thereby continuing the revenue shortage cycle
Rapid development	In some areas of rural King County, rapid residential development outpacing key economic development opportunities by taking prime property

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

Lack of data, research	Many rural areas do not have adequate access to data (demographics, marketing research, consumer profiles, etc.) to develop meaningful economic development plans
Jurisdictions	Jurisdictional lines, tax bases, etc. are not conducive to interjurisdictional cooperation... It is difficult for Enumclaw to invest outside its borders into King County, and difficult for King County to invest within Enumclaw making joint projects difficult.
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped.
KC Direction / Leadership	There is not enough KC leadership, coordination, or proactive positive contributions in rural areas... only mandates, restrictions, levies, etc.
Continuum of O&M and design standards	There should be a sliding scale along the level of design standards and O&M standards among urban and rural assets... rural areas do not want or need highly manicured, perfect parks or trails and the high O&M that comes with that...
Grants to rural areas	The number and amounts of flexible grants available to rural areas needs to be dramatically improved at the State and Count level
Marketing	Rural communities need help from user groups to identify existing eco-tourism assets as well as, the development needs of those assets.... King County needs to help rural communities to enhance and market those existing assets.
King County Leadership	King County needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.
Keep existing grants programs	Keep ADOP, YSFG, and other community grants coming... These are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation
Access to research, data	King County should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural communities
Invasive Species	Continue to make it possible/easy/doable to eliminate invasive species. Need more grants to accomplish. Also more education/outreach.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact information for the Rural Economic Strategies is as follows:

Julia L. Larson, Coordinator  
 Rural Economic Strategies  
 Office of Economic Development and Business Relations  
 701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
 Seattle, WA 98104  
 Email Address: [julia.larson@metrokc.gov](mailto:julia.larson@metrokc.gov)

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Website: <http://www.metrokc.gov/exec/bred/business/Projects/Rural.htm>

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

**APPENDIX C**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

**Comments Received on Summary of Public Meetings**

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from: Justin Vander Pol  
Date Received: 7/20/2005

Hi Julia,

I attended the meeting you held recently in Enumclaw, and members of our group will also be at the Tolt meeting. You encouraged us to provide written feedback to complement the comments we made in the breakout groups. Could you let me know the proper way to provide written comments?

Thanks for your work on this project, I really think it has the potential to have a long-term positive impact!

Cheers,

Justin Vander Pol  
Executive Director  
Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club  
<http://bbtc.org>  
206-524-2900

Do you want more mountain bike trails? Join today at  
[http://www.bbtc.org/php/show\\_page.php?page\\_id=45](http://www.bbtc.org/php/show_page.php?page_id=45)



## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from: Lee Grumman  
Date Received: 7/27/2005

Hi Julia,

Thanks for coming out to Carnation last night. It is reassuring to know that the County is investing their time in helping us to develop our rural-based economies out here...a challenge indeed!

I had an idea that I wanted to pass along. You may recall that I asked about the Barn Again program last night. Ray was kind enough to put me in touch with Julie Kohler with whom I spoke briefly about the project and sure enough Julie confirmed my impression that the Barn Again project seeks to find alternative economic uses for the barns.

In light of this intent I thought it would be great to integrate the Barn Again program in the work on rural economic strategies. For example, I'd love to see a brief description of the Barn Again project when you send along with the comments you've just collected from Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation. It would be helpful to have a representative from the project at future community meetings or at least an update included on the meeting agendas.

Also, could you send me a list of the names, titles and contact information for the King County folks that were at the meeting last night? I'd like to know who all is involved.

Thank you!!!!

Lee Grumman

425.333.4974  
[www.millersarts.com](http://www.millersarts.com)

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from Rita Schenck  
Received 8/12/2005

Julia,

I thought that you did an admirable job gathering together the notes for the island.

A couple of thoughts:

Vashon has lots of camps—Camp Burton, Camp Sealth, summer arts camps, etc. They can for the most part be thought of as a nascent ecotourism business sector. We could build on that.

Lots of the things that were brought up we are already working on e.g. forestry/light industry, sustainable ag. When the opportunities show up that would allow us (IERE) to partner with you to get some of these things to happen, please do think of us.

Getting closer....

Rita

Institute for Environmental Research and Education  
PO Box 2449, Vashon, WA 98070 USA  
Phone: 206-463-7430 Fax: 206-279-1570

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from: Len Guss  
Received on 8/12/2005

Julie, I have reviewed the material you sent and have the following comments:

1. Making and using local wood for construction - Local, distant or foreign, all lumber manufactured has to be graded according to accepted standards to pass codes. Grading requires an experienced grader, usually found in larger sawmills, or a machine which tests each piece of lumber -- somewhat expensive. Otherwise the lumber could only be used for nonstructural purposes: fencing, decking (after treating) etc.
2. I'm reasonably sure that King County could use a business consisting of a portable, truck-mounted sawmill (of which there are several) which would travel within the county to saw small volumes of timber. KC could also use a central dry kiln to which said lumber could be taken and custom dried and graded.
3. Obviously KC present CAO and permitting go a long way towards killing any reasonable forest endeavors on the part of small timberholders. Thinning, for example, is a constant need and should require little or no permitting. It's as essential for trees as for carrots.
4. Equestrians support many businesses but this is in serious decline here as horse trails are absorbed by residential construction. The number of horses and riders has declined and certainly as I am aware most small retailers serving the horse industry have gone kaput. Building another equestrian park is not a solution, although it is always welcome. We need more trails; every rural development should be obligated to incorporate equestrian trails as other communities have done. When people have a place to ride they buy and use more horses and horse related businesses.

If KC decides to support rural forestry, equestrian use, agriculture or whatever, the county should assign only staff with relevant knowledge and experience, rather than Seattle apartment dwellers who have never seen a sawmill, worked on a farm, ridden a horse or whatever. That would go a long way towards building trust and devising sensible support. For example, some years ago I met with a KC planner on behalf of equestrians. His idea was to protect grazing lands by requiring horses to eat only to 3" of grass. However, when I inquired as to how we were to police this and educate the horses, no answer was forthcoming.

Good luck and best regards,

Len

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

**From:** Martin Koenig  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 25, 2005 2:58 PM  
**To:** Moore, Ghislaine  
**Cc:** Nelson, Sharon; Constantine, Dow  
**Subject:** Re: From King County, Julia Larson Rural Strategies Coordinator

Dear Julia,

I appreciated receiving the minutes from the July 21, 2005 meeting, but am concerned that they do not accurately represent all of the perspectives that were represented. I, and at least one other person, spoke to an alternative approach for economic development on our island. Our comments were not reflected in the minutes, nor was there any reference to the CD I provided you, and the information it contains.

This omission in the minutes results in a misrepresentation of what occurred at the meeting. Importantly, it also narrows the focus of discussion at a time when we should be discussing a range of options, a range of possible futures for our island.

Many islanders are concerned about what type of economic development may occur in our community. This is apparant from the CD I provided you. Meetings on economic development naturally draw strong representation from the business community, but it is important to recognize that there is a large group of community members who may not share their perspective. It is also important to represent this perspective accurately in minutes, even if it is expressed by a minority of those attending a meeting.

This "island scale" perspective is very realistic. It is based on the recognition of our limited island infrastructure, our dependence on increasing ferry costs, and the competition for our tax dollars for stable funding for our schools, fire protection, and our health clinic. This perspective, at the least, should be offered as one alternative to the scenario outlined in your minutes.

When developing future scenarios, rarely is a single one chosen. By analyzing alternative options, assumptions can be fully discussed, sensitivity analyses can reveal issues that had not been identified, and a community can talk about the values they hold. An analysis of a single future does not give our community this opportunity for discussion. And it does not provide us with information about how we can maximize our flexibility in response to changing conditions (e.g. ferry costs) or changing demographics.

I respectfully request that you describe this "island scale" perspective in the minutes, as it was represented at the meeting, and distribute this addition to the minutes to your distribution list.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to participating in upcoming meetings.

Sincerely,

Martin Koenig.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from: Richard Bonewits  
August 29, 2005

To: Julia Larson, Coordinator – Rural Economic Development Strategy  
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development  
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Cc: Ron Sims, King County Executive  
Ray Moser, King County Manager-Business Relations  
Larry Phillips, Chairman-King County Council  
Dow Constantine, Member King County Council and Chairman-Growth  
Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee  
David Irons, Member King County Council and Member-Growth  
Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee  
Steve Hammond, Member King County Council and Member-Growth  
Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee

Subject: Comments on Rural Economic Development Plan (King County)

As the County has become more urbanized, we have become increasingly concerned about the reliability of the policy development process used by King County regarding the rural area. We have noted that the rural area policy making process relies less and less on the opinions of rural area citizens and landowners and that it gives more and more credence to the opinions of others.

We are also concerned about the validity of the information that may be reported from this “exercise:”

- 1) The total attendance at the three (3) public meetings was too low to provide any statistical validity to this “exercise”: **120 people (total) attended the three (3) meetings held (Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation) with 24 of them being County employees and a significant number of the remainder living and representing either recreational, equestrian, tourism, or Rural Town, or Rural City interests.** Excluding the County employees, 96 people attended these meetings. There are more than 130,000 citizens in King County’s rural areas (all areas outside the Urban Growth Line). This amounts to a 7/100 of 1% response – hardly enough to support a County public policy.
- 2) **No measures were used to provide traceability of inputs to their source.**

Since the primary purpose of this exercise was to determine what, if anything, should be done by the County to facilitate business development in the rural area, all suggestions from outside the rural area should be contrasted with, or subordinated, in your final report on this “exercise” to the inputs that you received on forestry, agriculture and home occupations (which may be applicable to the needs of rural area citizens and landowners).

Although comments, outside the structured “round table” type discussions used by the County, were not encouraged by the County, many valuable comments were offered by the citizens

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

(especially from Vashon), which may say more about their points of view on this subject than were offered in the structured groups set up by King County to discuss business development related to the topics of agriculture, forestry, home occupations, rural cities and towns, recreation, and tourism.

I made careful notes of these comments and I believe that they should be included in your final report to the Executive and King County Council. Here they are:

“You couldn’t have picked a worse night. We have two many other community events going on tonight that are popular within the community, such as music in the park.”

“What’s the purpose of this project, we like Vashon as it is.”

“How did this study come about? Did the landowners cry for help?”

“It seems that this study doesn’t include any measurement of the negative impacts, or costs, of the additional activities that might be required, or impacted, e.g. traffic, roads, or to the rural way of life.”

**“You need a vision statement – it makes no sense to do a survey on rural economic needs before you have vision of the kind community the citizens want for themselves.”** [My emphasis]

“Why weren’t the people notified better and why did you go to the chambers of commerce first? Whose interests do they represent – certainly not the landowners.”

**“This looks like an opportunity for King County to slide into development of the rural areas through the back door by pretending to care about the small landowners by supporting development in the Rural Cities, towns and neighborhood businesses until they appeal to the County for more area to annex from the rural area.”**

### My personal comments:

King County Staff members continue to repeat, what seems to be an uneducated and counterintuitive mantra that says that it wants to help sustain and enhance the ability of rural landowners to engage in forestry and agriculture and to maintain a rural lifestyle, while simultaneously supporting build-up of Rural Cities and towns. This mantra appears ludicrous to many rural area people, who have spent years adjusting to changing County rural area policies and who have developed their necessary supply sources and markets developed and who know what their costs and profit potential are. Forestry and farming require large amounts of capital and labor. They have high start-up, operating and regulatory costs and their operations often involve significant borrowing costs and taxes. Further, except for a handful of special cases, it is not probable that many Home Occupations and Cottage Industries will generate sufficient dollar income to make more than a small difference in the income of rural people. It is even less likely that the added tax revenues generated will offset the additional County infrastructure costs. Further, all rural people know that their real estate is more highly valued for residential and commercial development than it is for forestry, agriculture, or Rural Area residences. **The**

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recurring questions are: “Whose idea was this study?” What are its purposes?” “Who is expected to benefit from any changes?” “What are you doing to keep special interests from driving rural area policy?”

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As final note, as you know, I am Chairman of the Greater Maple Valley Area Council, which meets monthly. Since the summary of the information, which you gathered during this “exercise,” was not available for our Area Council to review at our August meeting, we may have further comments after our September meeting.

Thank you,

***Original signed by***

Richard E. Bonewits, 20114 SE 206<sup>th</sup> St. Maple Valley, WA 98038



## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT



September 12, 2005

Julia Larson, Coordinator  
Rural Economic Strategies  
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development  
BOA-EX-2000  
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: R-106, Rural Economic Strategies, history, and recent events:

Dear Ms. Larson:

This message is an expansion of the letter dated July 26, 2005 addressed to "Rural working families" I gave to Ray Moser the same day of the public presentation you made in Carnation about your rural economic strategy. By now you should be aware, the King County "zoning code" holds the majority of economic uses seen in rural areas are not legal uses under 21A30.080 & 090: Home occupation(s), and Home industry respectively. These standards are easily exceeded by a neighborhood lemonade stand.

Over the years I have assisted several rural working families engaged in Cottage industries who have found themselves under the scrutiny of DOES code enforcement. For that reason, I have been asked by persons engaged in economic activities that take place on residential property within unincorporated King County to comment on this issue and your progress.

There are concerns that King County Comprehensive Plan Policy R- I 07 may lead to unintentional backdoor sprawl and/or the conversion of rural areas to de-facto urban/suburban development. Further, your emphasis on R-107 may well lead to the duplication of existing programs designed to address the needs of farms, forests, and independent rural cities. The emphasis to be put forth should be the importance of protecting other elements of rural character and eliminating counterproductive code enforcements. It is more in keeping with State and local policy to quell the serial damage King County Comprehensive Plan Policy R-I 06 was intended to curtail.

Issues: Cottages are generally associated with rural areas and rural lifestyles. For the purposes of this communication: "Cottage industry" means any activity undertaken for gain or profit and carried on in a rural dwelling, or building accessory to a rural dwelling,

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by the home owner with or without the assistance of nonresident employee(s). Jobs by the two's and ten's support the economic needs of many rural people throughout the rural areas of the United States.

As you will find later in this communication, these work activities are inextricably linked to rural lifestyles and are important to the general welfare of the population of Washington State. Some of these services rise to the level of private utilities in the "Rural area" e.g. potable water, and septic services, and others provide necessary infrastructure to support farming, forestry, tourism, and rural cities, unincorporated towns, and neighborhoods.

It is essential you understand these existing rural uses are independent and successful because they operate from the owner's rural residential property. They are not under financial pressure to pay rent for and/or purchase the costly and limited amount of land currently zoned I (Industrial), RB (Regional Business) or O (Office) found in designated Rural Cities e.g. North Bend, Rural Towns e.g. Vashon Island, Rural Neighborhoods e.g. Preston, and/or the "Urban" areas.

In 1990 the Growth Management Act (GMA) came into play regarding future planning for growth in Washington State. Since statewide adoption of GMA, local political subdivisions within the region encountered considerable confusion about what constitutes rural development versus urban and/or suburban development which led to debate and investigation.

One of the many things left unclear was a description and/or definition of what "Rural character" is. Many commentators hypothesized that rural character is anything which existed and/or could be permitted within the rural area. In turn, GMA has been amended several times. Amendments to give a clearer picture of rural character are expected to continue into the future as State and local officials and the public discover elements of the rural area that are essential for preserving, but were never contemplated and not protected.

After King County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan (1994) under GMA rural residents began to feel the heat. The "heat" I refer to is: the friction of too many things to do in too little time. The consequence is misdirected code enforcement actions against rural families and great unnecessary suffering.

Approximately a year after the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, it was explained to me by Lori Grant, who worked as a senior planner for the King County Office of Regional Policy and Planning (ORPP), that ORPP was aware there was a gap between the code and elements of rural character. ORPP was under great pressure to finish a plan within the time fixed for compliance, and there was not enough time to attend to all issues, and it did not appear to ORPP to be crucial to the process, or to fix the deficiency right away.

Therefore: among other good things the current King County zoning code secures, is the right to ride horses for pleasure, raise llamas for fun, have a family garden, and go fishing in the rural

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area. However, the right to work and live in the rural area and earn enough to support a family while contributing to rural character and the rural economy is not allowed under code as it should be.

It is not the intention of GMA, County-wide Planning Policies, or King County's Comprehensive Plan to "snuff out" independent traditional rural family-wage jobs. "Urban Growth Areas" (UGA's) e.g. the rural cities, the "Forest Production Area" (FPD), "Agriculture Production Area" (APD), and "Mineral Resource Lands" are not zoned R-A (rural area). King County code boilerplate provides directives to insure preservation of basic rural concepts.

KCC 21A.04.060 Rural area zone.

**A. The purpose of the rural zone (RA) is to provide for an area-wide long-term rural character and to minimize land use conflicts with nearby agricultural or forest production districts or mineral extraction sites. These purposes are accomplished by:**

**1. Limiting residential densities and permitted uses to those that are compatible with rural character and nearby resource production districts and sites and are able to be adequately supported by rural service levels;**

**2. Allowing small scale farming and forestry activities and tourism and recreation uses that can be supported by rural service levels and that are compatible with rural character;**

**3. Increasing required setbacks to minimize conflicts with adjacent agriculture, forest or mineral zones; and ... . (Ord. 14045 § 1, 2001; Ord. 11621 § 10, 1994: **Ord.10870 § 27, 1993**). Emphasis added.**

Nonetheless, for over a decade the Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) has administered progressively strict regulatory controls over rural economics.

In 1993 Ordinance 10870 (Section 536 Home occupations) was codified, and for the first time in the history of King County, urban, suburban, and rural area small scale home grown family enterprises were being seen as "one in the same", and together challenged and eliminated. Enforcement of flawed development standards absent the aim of corrective statewide and local measures has inadvertently led DDES to assumptions that obscure the essence of rural area economics or "sense of community and quality of life".

Moreover, it appears from the legislative history, which began as far back as 1958, regulations under KCC 21A.30.080 & 090 (Home occupation(s), and industries) were never intended for "Rural areas". In short, DDES has been engaging in the indiscriminate destruction of rural character, and it may well be this damage is based on ORPP's original omission (error).

There are serious concerns regarding the information available on the King County website set up to enlighten the public about the course of action your "Rural Economic Strategies" team has taken so far during this effort. Therefore, I would like to have your response to the following comments and questions as soon as you can provide them:

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The problem at hand: In King County the trappings of rural economic prosperity are disappearing from the countryside landscape, and the rural lifestyle is evolving into a suburban nightmare for rural residents who work from the property they live on. GMA (RCW 36.70A), upholds the statewide view that rural property owners have the right to live and work in the "rural area".

RCW 36.70A.030(14) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:

(b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas:

(c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;... .  
Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.030(15) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas. Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.011-Findings — Rural lands. The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life. The legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create opportunities for business development. Further, the legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to retain existing businesses and allow them to expand, The legislature recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the local planning unit. Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070/51, a county should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve rural based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life. [2002 c 212 § 1.] Emphasis added.

"Consistency" with the goals, terms, and meanings of state-wide regulations is the first step in local planners documenting compliance with GMA. As provided above, the terms rural character and "family wage jobs" are synonymous and inextricably tied together creating the bits and pieces that hold the rural area together. Nonetheless, the lack of appropriate reaction to the GMA directives above, Countywide Planning Policies e.g. FW-9, and the King County Comprehensive Plan e.g. Policies (R-105, R-106, &R-107, and hands-on experience with real world rural area economic practices, are endangering what elected officials have advertised as the product of their labors: "preserving rural character for future generations."

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## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

King County lawmakers found the current code regulating "Home occupations and industries" to be deficient in clarity, lacking the flexibility to sustain a needed and identified balanced approach to the preservation of all essential elements of rural character.

The original version of KCCP policy R-I 06 was discussed in Committee and then went before the entire Council during "public legislative hearings" and was blessed with passage by all Councilmembers in attendance voting "Aye" (yes), and by the Executive with the approval of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan. This language as promulgated provided directives (e.g.)..... "shall" ..., and contained performance requirements (e.g.)..... "by December 31, 2001". ....

Unfortunately, the intent, or "Effect" of R-106 has been ignored by King County administrators since its adoption. See Attachment No.1.

Are you also going to ignore the intent of R-I 06? Can you ask the King County Growth Management & Unincorporated Areas Committee to provide more guidance and perhaps avoid creating another bureaucratic (staff) problem regarding the analysis referred to in R-I06?

Despite State and local legislation to prevent the misuse of code enforcement, the corrections found herein are being allowed and/or helped to "fall between the cracks". For instance: Many times I have heard County staff discuss farm and/or forest production areas and use the term rural character, and later refer to the rest of the rural area as "residential". Residential infers urban and/or suburban development and uses.

The effort to loosen the current rural economic stranglehold on rural lifestyles has gone unnoticed by King County's regulator (DDES), and now apparently you. Currently DDES code enforcement staff estimate 20% of their caseload are actions taken to shut down home grown rural small scale enterprises.

Attachments No. I, 2 and 3 provide the clarity you need to emphasize. The amendments the King County Council crafted last year reiterated the promises King County made to rural residents, and reminded DDES of its obligation to react to legal legislative enactments as required. As you can see, last year R-I06 was amended to strike 2001 and indicate 2005 as the "deadline" for DDES to recommend code changes for review by December 31.

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a "glossary" of terms that includes the meaning of the word "shall" when used in official land use policies:

Shall: To guide King County, the use of the terms "shall," 'will,' 'should,' and 'may' in policies determine the level of discretion the County can exercise in making future and specific land use, budget, development regulation and other decisions. 'Shall' and 'will' in a policy mean that it is mandatory for the County to carry out the policy, even if a timeframe is not included. "Shall" and 'will' are Imperative and

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

nondiscretionary - the County must make decisions based on what the policy says to do. "Should" in a policy provides noncompulsory guidance, and establishes that the County has some discretion in making decisions. "May" in a policy means that it is in the County's interest to carry out the policy, but the County has total discretion in making decisions. Emphasis added.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of this public duty: almost five (5) years have elapsed since Comprehensive Plan Policy R-1 06 was originally adopted in 2000. It gathered dust while DDES actively eliminated rural character and family wage jobs one after another.

The unimplemented Comprehensive Plan Policy (R-I06) was designed to provide a crosswalk ramp up approach for protection of family wage jobs and other worthy rural qualities. This legislative directive would have, and still is to establish the appropriate conditions to lay the necessary ground work making it possible to evaluate facts, and recommend unified changes to County regulations based on educated deductions.

However, because *of* conversations I gave had with DDES high level staff, and the public presentation you made in Carnation, I do not believe DDES or you are enthusiastic about paying attention to existing rural area criteria developed under mandatory GMA rural requirements e.g. RCW 36.70A.070(5)(b), County-wide Planning Policy FW-9, and/or the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies R-105, R-106, and R-107.

You have advertised "interest" in rural citizens' ideas about preserving the economic viability of the County's rural area while maintaining its character, yet your website reveals you have made no effort to "review code regulations under R-I 06. It is important for you to review development regulations to determine possible conflicts and issues *of* code enforcement that threaten existing small rural businesses. This review would also identify the type and scope of regulations needed to preserve existing rural "family-wage jobs. "Your meetings to gather public comments regarding a "Rural Economic Strategy" are thus hampered, and therefore may result in a GMA noncompliant, odd, and ineffective outcome.

Your website provides a list of some of the existing uses currently at risk and/or lost during this extended delay e.g.: roof and gutter repair, welding, plumbing, repair of small and large motors (diesel gas, and electric), landscaping, irrigation, carpentry, locksmiths, tree service and fireplace wood supply, blacksmith services, window and auto glass repair, excavation, electrician and electronic services, septic service, janitorial services, house cleaning services, building painting services, mobile veterinarian services, roadside vegetables, flowers, eggs, honey and other locally grown and/or manufactured products and services.

To be viable, most of these cottage industries must exceed existing code standards and employ more than one non-resident and require vehicles over two and one-half tons of weight capacity, or need to have "heavy equipment" kept on the site. Your list *of* existing cottage industries is a good start, however you also need to provide the analysis R -106 requires.

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**



## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

These trades and services are taxed and licensed by the State of Washington to do business in and on property zoned rural (RA). These businesses support already in place permitted development including farming, forestry, mineral production, homes, businesses, recreation, rural cities and are "supported by rural service levels", and generate what the current code has been wrongfully eliminating from the landscape: "Rural character". The questions you need to answer are:

- Do these uses and their associated structures limit and impair rural character, and/or preclude any residential use permitted by the underlying zoning?
- Are these uses inextricably linked to the rural lifestyle, and therefore important to the general welfare of the rural population, if not all of King County?

In other words: the consequences of not having the results of the mandatory reviews and assessments in front of you and/or the participants in the public meetings so far held, creates another opportunity for errors, furthers rural suffering, and is a waste of taxpayers time and money. Additionally, your effort to date does not support the diversity of rural economic activities or cottage industries that currently exist, and is contrary to your mission as explained in documents (policies & laws) generated by King County and Washington State.

It could be construed an attempt to mislead the King County Council and citizens is on going, and could shift the rural vision to a suburban agenda. On July 19, 2005 The Growth Management and Unincorporated Areas Committee met and a briefing was given (item No.4, 2005-B0094). Karen Wolf, Ray Moser, and you reviewed the "Rural Economic Strategies" so far investigated. Karen Wolf stated any actions must comport to GMA directives, King County Comprehensive Plan Policies, and **create the capacity for rural residents to live and work in the rural area**. Karen Wolf told the Committee the reason for doing so is outlined in Policies R-106 & R-107. The information on your website makes no reference to R-106. Why not?

Will you please provide me with the budget description of your mission and/or any other directives regarding what you are assigned to do? Have you, or anyone else officially connected to this effort, contacted DOES regarding its regulations governing Home occupations and Home industry and/or code enforcement undertaken to enforce these flawed standards?

You and I had a telephone conversation long before any of the public meetings were set to elicit comments from attendees on opportunities and unmet needs to be targeted. Nonetheless, I received no notices, and by chance found out about the Carnation meeting. The intent of R-107 is to invite and inform interested citizens of discussions, meetings and/or public gatherings for the purpose of formatting approaches for fulfillment of this mandated action, and your results. Will you let me know about any further stake-holder meetings and/or events held to discuss this issue?

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

I will be asking Mr. Constantine to again hold a public meeting to allow comment on the Rural Economic Strategies you are preparing as was done on July 19, 2005. I hope you will redirect your efforts to encompass the principals R -106 tries to facilitate.

Sincerely:

~.~~/

Paul P. Carkeek

Eco Site  
PO Box 588  
Preston Washington 98050 425-  
222-5662

cc:

The Honorable Dow Constantine, Chair of the King County Growth Management & Unincorporated Areas Committee, and King County Council Members.

The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive

**Note unable to scan in a readable manner the attachments which are ...**

- 1) R-106 – B- dated 7/18/2000 – Amendment to Attachment A to Proposed Ordinance 2000-0186, Dated June 29, 2000, Sponsored by David Irons**
- 2) The News Release from King County Council dated July 20, 2004 ... Entitled: Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan Update, Protect Character of Rural Areas, Working Farms, and Forests.**
- 3) Comprehensive Plan R-106 and Section 3, The Rural Economy, R 106 and R-107.**

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

**APPENDIX C**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

**Other Written Comments Received**

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

To: Rural working families

From: Paul P. Carkeek  
Eco-site  
Po Box 588  
Preston, WA 98050  
425-222-5662  
[penryn@centurytel.net](mailto:penryn@centurytel.net)

Date: July 26, 2005

Re: Rural Economic Strategy?

**The problem at hand:** In King County the trappings of rural economic prosperity are disappearing from the countryside landscape and the rural lifestyle is evolving into a suburban nightmare for rural residents who work from the property they live on.

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) RCW 36.70A, upholds the view that rural property owners have the right to live and work in the "rural area". "Urban Growth Areas" (UGA's), like rural cities, the "Forest Production Area" (FPD), "Agriculture Production Area" (APD) and/or "Mineral Resource Lands" are not zoned rural (R-A), however, your rural home is.

**RCW 36.70A.030(14)** "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:. . . .

(b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;

(c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities; . . . .

Emphasis added.

**RCW 36.70A.030(15)** "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas. Emphasis added.

**RCW 36.70A.011--Findings -- Rural lands.** The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life. The legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create opportunities for business development. Further, the legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to retain existing businesses and allow them to expand. The legislature recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the local planning unit. Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070(5), a county should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment;

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life. [2002 c 212 § 1.] Emphasis added.

Consistency with the goals, terms, and meanings of state-wide regulations is the first step in local planning documenting compliance with GMA. As provide above, the terms “rural character” and “family wage jobs” are synonymous and inextricably tied together creating the glue that holds the rural area together. Nonetheless, a lack of appropriate reaction to GMA directives, King County Comprehensive Plan Policies, and hands-on experience with **real world** rural area practices is endangering what elected officials have advertised as the product of their labors: “preserving rural character for future generations.”

The Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) is charged with administering increasingly strict regulatory controls over rural economics that appeared over a decade ago. For instance, in 1993 Ordinance 10870 (Section 536 Home occupations) was codified and for the first time in the history of King County urban, suburban, and rural small scale home grown family enterprises were being seen as “one in the same”, and together challenged and eliminated. Enforcement of flawed development standards absent the aim of corrective measures has inadvertently led DDES to assumptions that obscure the essence of rural area economics or “sense of community and quality of life”.

For this reason, the current code regulating “Home occupations” has been found to lack clarity (applicability) and the flexibility to sustain or support a needed and identified balanced approach to the preservation of all essential elements of rural character. Despite State and local legislation to prevent the misuse of code enforcement, the corrections found herein are being allowed and/or helped to “fall between the cracks”.

For instance: Many times I have heard County staff discuss farm and/or forest production areas and use the term “Rural Character”, and later refer to the rest of the rural area as “residential”. The effort to loosen the current rural economic stranglehold on rural lifestyles has gone unnoticed by King County’s regulator, (DDES). Currently DDES code enforcement staff estimate 20% of their caseload are actions taken to shutdown home grown rural small scale enterprises.

Attachment No. 1 and 2 provide clarification and the amendments the King County Council crafted last year to again remind DDES of its obligation to react to legal legislative enactments as required by the King County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter Three: The Rural Economy. DDES is also charged with implementing legislative directives. The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a “glossary” of terms that includes the meaning of the word “**shall**” when used in official land use policies:

**Shall:** To guide King County, the use of the terms “shall,” “will,” “should,” and “may” in policies determine the level of discretion the County can exercise in making future and specific land use, budget, development regulation and other decisions. “Shall” and “will” in a policy mean that it is mandatory for the County to carry out the policy, even if a timeframe is not included. “Shall” and “will” are imperative and nondiscretionary – the County must make decisions based on what the policy says to do. “Should” in a policy provides noncompulsory guidance, and establishes that the County has some discretion in making decisions. “May” in a policy means that it is in the County’s interest to carry out the policy, but the County has total discretion in making decisions. Emphasis added.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of this public duty: almost five (5) years have elapsed since Comprehensive Plan Policy R-106 was originally adopted in 2000. It gathered dust while DDES

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

actively eliminated rural character and family wage jobs one after another. The unimplemented Comprehensive Plan Policy R-106 was designed to provide a crosswalk ramp up approach for protection of family wage jobs and other worthy rural qualities. This legislative directive would have established the appropriate conditions to lay the necessary ground work making it possible to evaluate facts, and recommend unified changes to County regulations based on educated deductions.

Last year R-106 was amended to strike 2001 and indicate 2005 as the “deadline” for DDES to recommend code changes, for review by the King County Council by December 31. Also King County adopted **new** Policy R-107. However, because of recent conversations I have had with DDES high level staff, I do not believe DDES is willing to pay attention to existing rural area criteria developed under mandatory GMA rural requirements e.g. RCW 36.70A.070(5)(b), County-wide Planning Policy FW-9, and/or the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies.

King County/DDES is advertising an “interest” in ideas about how to ensure the economic viability of the rural area “while maintaining its character”, yet DDES has made no effort to inventory the existing family wage producing jobs existing, and/or “**review its regulations and programs to preserve this component of the County’s Rural Area**”.

It is important to review development regulations to determine possible conflicts and issues of code enforcement that threaten existing small businesses. This review would also identify the type and scope of regulations needed to preserve existing traditional "family-wage jobs." King County’s meetings to gather public comments regarding a “Rural Economic Strategy” are thus hampered, and therefore may result in a GMA noncompliant, odd, and ineffective outcome.

The "variety" of existing uses currently at risk during this extended delay includes, but is not limited to the following: roof and gutter repair, welding, plumbing, repair of small and large motors (diesel, gas, and electric), landscaping, irrigation, carpentry, locksmiths, tree service and fireplace wood supply, blacksmith services, window and auto glass repair, excavation, electrician and electronic services, septic service, janitorial services, house cleaning services, building painting services, mobile veterinarian services, roadside vegetables, flowers, eggs, honey and other locally grown and/or manufactured products and services that must employ more than one non-resident and require a vehicle over two and one-half tons of weight capacity, or “heavy equipment” to be kept on the site.

These trades and services are taxed and licensed by the State of Washington to do business in and on property zoned rural. These businesses support already in place permitted developments including farming, forestry, mineral production, homes and business, and recreation. The questions are:

- Do these uses and their associated structures limit and impair Rural Character, and/or preclude any residential use permitted by the underlying zoning?
- Are these uses inextricably linked to rural lifestyle, and therefore important to the general welfare of many, if not all, of the rural population?

**In other words:** not having the results of the mandatory reviews and assessments in front of you today creates another opportunity for errors, further rural suffering, and does not support the diversity of rural economic activities and cottage industries that currently exist. Be careful about what you ask for because there is a good chance you get that **only**.

Please contact me if you have any questions and/or want to help correct the errors of the past and prevent their recurrence.

**Thank you.**

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Note unable to scan in a readable manner the attachments which are ...

1) The News Release from King County Council dated July 20, 2004 ... Entitled:  
Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan Update, Protect Character of Rural  
Areas, Working Farms, and Forests.

2) Comprehensive Plan R-106 and Section 3, The Rural Economy, R 106 and R-107.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Email from Kathleen Fitch  
Received: October 6, 2005

To Julia Larson – Coordinator Rural Economic Strategy  
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development

Many of the members of EDSV have individually provided input into the King County Rural Economic Strategy Plan via e mail and participating in your town hall meeting.

EDSV, which comprises of several Vashon Business owners/managers have organized to have a strong voice in the health and well being of Vashon's Economic Process. To this end, as the present chair of the EDSV group, I have prepared the following letter for incorporation into the first draft of the Rural Economic Strategy Plan.

- Affordable housing

A major area of concern for all businesses, service/retail/manufacturing, is the limited affordable housing on the island. Without adequate staffing Vashon's business's ability to maintain quality service, provide acceptable open hours, (which is critical to servicing the commuter population) or pursue expansion opportunities are eroding. It also gives pause for any entrepreneur to open a new business even if it qualifies as a need for the island community.

The 1996 Vashon Town Plan states:

A Town to serve Islanders' needs: provide affordable housing

Vashon Household has begun to address this issue, which we are very grateful, but future plans to locate affordable housing within the Town proper as history has proved over and over and over again is a failed plan.

Affordable housing plans must be located throughout our island proper, such as in Burton, Dockton and Ellisport areas. This requires certain zoning laws be lifted to permit the affordable housing be built in areas mentioned above.

- Foster economic opportunities that are aligned with the islands resources, unique competitive advantages and values.

Encourage various governmental institutions to assist startup non-profit organizations that focus as a learning/teaching center for pacific region and Pacific Rim. Specific focus would be sustainability centers as well as a human rights center. Both areas have various grass roots movements on the island.

- Assist non-profit & for profit small business owners in purchasing commercial buildings for their business through various governmental incentives

As commercial property values increase - potentially rental leases will follow suit. Business owners offering services/products to the community at a reasonable rate will be unable to absorb the increased costs/or pass through their services/products and stay a viable business.



## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

A potential scenario resulting from the above:

Commercial building owners requiring higher leases, which in turn will become unsustainable by the current businesses, will pursue businesses that focus more on tourist's dollars. This will push to heighten level the selling of Vashon as a "major tourist" destination.

This culture will almost single handily change the rural quiet community which is focused on agriculture, forestry, sustainability center, research & human rights center and especially hi tech businesses to a tourism town similar to Mercer Island.

The Economic Development for a Sustainable Vashon, EDSV, thanks' you for this opportunity to have a strong voice in this process and including our points within the Rural Economic Strategies report forthcoming.

Kathleen Fitch  
EDSV Representative

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**



P O B o x 2 8 1

V a s h o n , W A 9 8 0 7 0

October 18, 2005

Julia L. Larson  
Coordinator, Rural Economic Strategies  
King County Office of Business Relations  
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 200  
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson:

The Vashon Maury Island Community Council wishes to provide these initial recommendations and input regarding the Rural Economic Strategies plan you are coordinating for King County. VMICC formed an Ad Hoc Economic Committee to provide a focus on economic issues pertaining to Vashon and Maury Island, and its recommendations have been considered by the Community Council in developing these initial recommendations.

The Community Council provides the following recommendations for consideration by King County as it develops its Rural Economic Strategies plan:

- VMICC endorses the general principles and policies as articulated in the King County Vashon Community Plan, completed in 1986, and the 1996 Vashon Town Plan. document. Relevant portions of these documents are enclosed for your reference.
- The County should support value-added agriculture and forestry, as well as agricultural and forestry activities as identified in prior Vashon planning documents.
- The County should create a more favorable economic environment for start-up businesses which are consistent with a rural environment. Support in-home businesses.
- The County should provide a more flexible implementation of County requirements so as to not impose urban requirements and practices on a rural environment. See goals and policies in Vashon Town Plan and Vashon Community Plan for specific examples. County departments need to communicate more effectively with each other and with the Vashon community regarding County actions being taken.

We understand that we will be provided further opportunities for review and comment as you develop and circulate a draft of the County's Rural Economic Strategies plan. We trust these initial recommendations will help guide the County on its development of plans and policies that will be consistent with the needs and goals of Vashon and Maury Island.

Sincerely,

James T. English, President  
Vashon-Maury Island Community Council  
Email: [jim\\_english@amerifresh.com](mailto:jim_english@amerifresh.com)  
(206) 463-3044

Ronald Leaders  
Chair, Economic Committee  
Email: [rladers@contractsolutionsgroup.com](mailto:rladers@contractsolutionsgroup.com)  
(206) 463-7434

encls.

11/18/2005

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**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

**APPENDIX D  
LETTERS SENT BY KING COUNTY  
ON BEHALF OF RURAL CITIZENS**

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

**Ron Sims**

King County Executive  
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3210 Seattle,  
WA 98104  
206-296-4040 Fax 206-296-0194  
TTY Relay: 711 www.metrokc.gov

May 26, 2005

Merritt D. Long, Chairman Washington  
State Liquor Control Board PO Box  
43075  
Olympia, W A 98504

Dear Chairman Long:

King County supports granting the winery license #08720-6A to Rockridge Orchards in the Enumclaw area. Rockridge Orchards is a well established and respected farming operation in King County and throughout the region. Wade and Judy Bennett, farmers and owners, have worked hard to identify new markets and new enterprises to keep their farm viable. Their entrepreneurship and good stewardship practices have served as a model for many farmers throughout the region.

Agricultural lands and farming provide valuable open space, quality of living, and fresh nutritious food to local citizens and the region. The County has taken a leadership role with respect to preserving, protecting and promoting local agriculture. In 1985, the County established Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) with large lot zoning and specified agriculture as the preferred use in these areas. Development regulations allow necessary infrastructure to support commercial agriculture. Specifically, the County recognizes the importance of adding value to farm products through processing, packaging and selling them directly to the consumer as a way to keep agriculture viable in an urban landscape. With this in mind, the County amended its 2004 Comprehensive Plan to allow for wineries and breweries to be developed in the APDs. In addition, Rockridge Orchards has been granted all applicable land use permits by the County for this activity.

Rockridge Orchards is located in the Enumclaw APD where value-added enterprises are supported and encouraged. The winery will be a valuable addition to the existing farming operations and will give consumers access to a diversity of new local products. This will help to sustain not only the farming operation but the other valuable economic, environmental and cultural benefits it generates as well. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Steven Evans, Project Program Manager of the Water and Land Resources Division in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-296-7824.

@

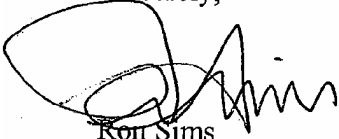
*King County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and  
complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act*

~1202M

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Merritt D. Long  
May 26, 2005  
Page 2

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Sims", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a series of loops and flourishes.

Ron Sims  
King County Executive

## PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

**From:** [Exec.Sims@metrokc.gov](mailto:Exec.Sims@metrokc.gov)

**Sent:** Friday, June 10, 2005 5:12 PM

**To:** 'amsdairycomments.@usda.gov'

**Cc:** 'senate\_murray@murray.senate.gov'; 'maria\_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov'; 'adam.smith@mail.house.gov'; ZZGrp, Council Members; 'alexiskoester@msn.com'; Northcroft, George

**Subject:** Agricultural Marketing Service, 7CFR Parts 1124 and 1131; Docket No. AO-368-A32, AO-271-A37; DA-03-04B

June 10, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed regulatory change identified as **Agricultural Marketing Service, 7 CFR Parts 1124 and 1131 – Docket No. AO-368-A32, AO-271-A37; DA-03-04B.**

If enacted, this change would negatively impact dairy operations that produce, process, and market milk from their own dairy cows on their own farms, commonly referred to as producer-handlers. We understand that this change would only apply to producer-handlers in the Washington/Oregon and Arizona/Las Vegas Milk Marketing Areas producing three million or more pounds per month; and that none of the other Milk Marketing Areas in the nation have implemented this requirement.

Smith Brothers Farms has operated in King County for 85 years, employs 110 people and contracts with 61 independent drivers to deliver milk to 40,000 homes and 14 local school districts. Its market niche is home delivery of reasonably-price milk that is free of growth hormones. Larger processors and cooperatives, because they buy milk from a variety of sources, cannot guarantee growth hormone-free milk and rely on large chain stores to sell their milk rather than provide home delivery.

If the proposed regulatory change is enacted, Smith Brothers will be required to ostensibly sell its milk to a regional cooperative at the pooled (average) price of four different classes of milk. Then, because Smith Brothers processes and sells its milk as Class One (fluid or beverage) milk, the highest-priced milk, the company will be required to ostensibly buy it back at the higher Class One price.

While this is purely an accounting transaction with no milk actually changing hands, it would have devastating effects on Smith Brothers. Based on the company's current production volume, the difference between the pooled price it would receive and the repurchase price it would pay is about \$150,000 monthly, or \$1,800,000 annually. According to the company, this would exceed its annual net profits and require it to drastically reduce its current operations, including selling assets and eliminating jobs. And the money taken directly from Smith Brothers' net profits would subsidize its competition -- larger, more inefficient processors.

King County has made a significant investment in preserving farmland for agriculture. Today, there are approximately 42,000 acres of land devoted to farming; a number that has stabilized in recent years. We are currently focusing on helping existing and future farmers maintain and operate their farms. And, we believe that the future of farming in King County will be based mainly on small family-run farms who sell their products directly to the consumer.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT**

Smith Brothers is a small producer-handler dairy, one of few such companies remaining in an industry rapidly being concentrated in larger and larger cooperatives and processors. As businesses like Smith Brothers cease operations, competition and consumer choice are reduced and jobs are lost. Many economic studies over the last few decades have decisively shown that small businesses are the principal generators of jobs in this country, not the big conglomerates.

We urge you not to artificially constrain competition and consumer choice by implementing this rule change, particularly when it would only apply to a total of four producer-handlers in the nation. Please allow the marketplace, the foundation of our economic system, to determine the success or failure of Smith Brothers and similar businesses.

Sincerely,

Ron Sims  
King County Executive

Larry Phillips  
Chair, King County Council

cc: The Honorable Patty Murray, United States Senator, State of Washington  
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, United States Senator, State of Washington  
The Honorable Adam Smith, 9th Congressional District Representative, State of Washington  
King County Councilmembers  
Alexis Koester, President, Smith Brothers Farms, Inc.  
George Northcroft, King County Office of Business Relations and Economic Development